

JUSTICE AND TOLERANCE

IN THE QUR'AN

"...if you do judge,
judge between
them justly.
God loves the just."
(Qur'an, 5:42)



HARUN YAHYA

When we talk about justice, everybody shares essentially the same basic concepts, and these are accepted by the majority of people right away. This justice will include people from all walks of life, with no discrimination between them. It will allocate resources fairly among people, without taking their race, religion and language into consideration and will aim to create a world in which the superior is the one who is right, not the powerful.

What often distances people from justice is their rejection of it. They may concur in principle, but they reject it when it conflicts with their own interests. For due administration of justice over the world, a morality which will enable people to set aside their personal benefits for the sake of justice is needed.

This morality is the values of the Qur'an which God commands and instructs us with in the Qur'an. That is because the values of the Qur'an command an absolute justice that makes no discrimination between people, that sides only with what is true and just.

Justice that is carried out with the fear of God and with the sole intention of earning God's approval is true justice. This form of justice makes no discrimination between people.

The purpose of this book is to describe the justice in the Qur'an.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author, who writes under the pen-name Harun Yahya, was born in Ankara in 1956. He studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University, and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, the author has published many books on political, faith-related and scientific issues. Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in helping many to return their faith in God, and, in many others, to gain a deeper insight into their faith. Harun Yahya's books appeal to all kinds of readers, regard-less of their age, race, or nationality, for they focus on one objective: to broaden the reader's perspective by encouraging him or her to think about a number of critical issues, such as the existence of God and His unity, and to live by the values He prescribed for them.

*In the name of God,
Most Gracious, Most Merciful*



TO THE READER

The reason why a special chapter is assigned to the collapse of the theory of evolution is that this theory constitutes the basis of all anti-spiritual philosophies. Since Darwinism rejects the fact of creation, and therefore the existence of God, during the last 140 years it has caused many people to abandon their faith or fall into doubt. Therefore, showing that this theory is a deception is a very important duty, which is strongly related to the religion. It is imperative that this important service be rendered to everyone. Some of our readers may find the chance to read only one of our books. Therefore, we think it appropriate to spare a chapter for a summary of this subject.

In all the books by the author, faith-related issues are explained in the light of Qur'anic verses, and people are invited to learn God's words and to live by them. All the subjects that concern God's verses are explained in such a way as to leave no room for doubt or question marks in the reader's mind. The sincere, plain and fluent style employed ensures that everyone of every age and from every social group can easily understand the books. This effective and lucid narrative makes it possible to read them in a single sitting. Even those who rigorously reject spirituality are influenced by the facts recounted in these books and cannot refute the truthfulness of their contents.

This book and all the other works by Harun Yahya can be read individually or discussed in a group. Those readers who are willing to profit from the books will find discussion very useful in that they will be able to relate their own reflections and experiences to one another.

In addition, it is a great service to the religion to contribute to the presentation and circulation of these books, which are written solely for the good pleasure of God. All the books of the author are extremely convincing, so, for those who want to communicate the religion to other people, one of the most effective methods is to encourage them to read these books.

It is hoped that the reader will take time to look through the review of other books on the final pages of the book, and appreciate the rich source of material on faith-related issues, which are very useful and a pleasure to read.

In them, one will not find, as in some other books, the personal views of the author, explanations based on dubious sources, styles unobservant of the respect and reverence due to sacred subjects, or hopeless, doubt-creating, and pessimistic accounts that create deviations in the heart.

JUSTICE AND TOLERANCE IN THE QUR'AN

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God loves the just. (Qur'an, 5:42)***

HARUN YAHYA

**SHAFIQ BOOKS
*January, 2003***

About The Author

The author, who writes under the pen-name HARUN YAHYA, was born in Ankara in 1956. Having completed his primary and secondary education in Ankara, he then studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, the author has published many books on political, faith-related and scientific issues. Harun Yahya is well-known as an author who has written very important works disclosing the imposture of evolutionists, the invalidity of their claims and the dark liaisons between Darwinism and bloody ideologies such as fascism and communism.

His pen-name is made up of the names "Harun" (Aaron) and "Yahya" (John), in memory of the two esteemed prophets who fought against lack of faith. The Prophet's seal on the cover of the books is symbolic and is linked to the their contents. It represents the Qur'an (the final scripture) and the Prophet Muhammad, the last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and sunnah, the author makes it his purpose to disprove each one of the fundamental tenets of godless ideologies and to have the "last word", so as to completely silence the objections raised against religion. The seal of the final Prophet, who attained ultimate wisdom and moral perfection, is used as a sign of his intention of saying this last word.

All author's works center around one goal: to convey the Qur'an's message to people, encourage them to think about basic faith-related issues (such as the existence of God, His unity and the Hereafter), and to expose the feeble foundations and perverted ideologies of godless systems.

Harun Yahya enjoys a wide readership in many countries, from India to America, England to Indonesia, Poland to Bosnia, and Spain to Brazil. Some of his books are available in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Urdu, Arabic, Albanian, Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uyghur Turkish, and Indonesian, and they are enjoyed by readers worldwide.

Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in many people recovering their faith in God and in many others gaining a deeper insight into their faith. The wisdom, and the sincere and easy-to-understand style gives these books a distinct touch which directly effects any one who reads or studies them. Immune to objections, these works are characterized by their features of rapid effectiveness, definite results and irrefutability. It is unlikely that those who read these books and give serious thought to them can any longer sincerely advocate the materialistic philosophy, atheism or any other perverted ideology or philosophy. Even if they continue to do so, it will be only a sentimental insistence since these books refuted such ideologies from their very foundations. All contemporary movements of denial are now ideologically defeated, thanks to the collection of books written by Harun Yahya.

There is no doubt that these features result from the wisdom and lucidity of the Qur'an. The author modestly intends to serve as a means in humanity's search for God's right path. No material gain is sought in the publication of these works.

Considering these facts, those who encourage people to read these books, which open the "eyes" of the heart and guide them to become more devoted servants of God, render an invaluable service.

Meanwhile, it would just be a waste of time and energy to propagate other books which create confusion in peoples' minds, lead man into ideological chaos, and which, clearly have no strong and precise effects in removing the doubts in peoples' hearts, as also verified from previous experience. It is apparent that it is impossible for books devised to emphasize the author's literary power rather than the noble goal of saving people from loss of faith, to have such a great effect. Those who doubt this can readily see that the sole aim of Harun Yahya's books is to overcome disbelief and to disseminate the moral values of the Qur'an. The success and impact of this service are manifest in readers' conviction.

One point should be kept in mind: The main reason for the continuing cruelty, conflict, and all the ordeals the majority of people undergo is the ideological prevalence of disbelief. This state can only be ended with the ideological defeat of disbelief and by conveying the wonders of creation and Qur'anic morality so that people can live by it. Considering the state of the world today, which leads people into the downward spiral of violence, corruption and conflict, it is clear that this service has to be provided more speedily and effectively. Otherwise, it may be too late.

It is no exaggeration to say that the collection of books by Harun Yahya have assumed this leading role. By the will of God, these books will be a means through which people in the 21st century will attain the peace, justice and happiness promised in the Qur'an.

The works of the author include *The New Masonic Order, Judaism and Freemasonry, Global Freemasonry, Kabbalah and Freemasonry, Knight Templars, Islam Denounces Terrorism, Terrorism: The Ritual of the Devil, The Disasters Darwinism Brought to Humanity, Communism in Ambush, Fascism: The Bloody Ideology of Darwinism, The 'Secret Hand' in Bosnia, Behind the Scenes of The Holocaust, Behind the Scenes of Terrorism, Israel's Kurdish Card, The Oppression Policy of Communist China and Eastern Turkestan, Palestine, Solution: The Values of the Qur'an, The Winter of Islam and Its Expected Spring, Articles 1-2-3, A Weapon of Satan: Romanticism, The Light of the Qur'an Destroyed Satanism, Signs from the Chapter of the Cave to the Last Times, Signs of the Last Day, The Last Times and The Beast of the Earth, Truths 1-2, The Western World Turns to God, The Evolution Deceit, Precise Answers to Evolutionists, The Blunders of Evolutionists, Confessions of Evolutionists, The Misconception of the Evolution of the Species, The Qur'an Denies Darwinism, Perished Nations, For Men of Understanding, The Prophet Musa, The Prophet Yusuf, The Prophet Muhammad (saas), The Prophet Sulayman, The Golden Age, Allah's Artistry in Colour, Glory is Everywhere, The Importance of the Evidences of Creation, The Truth of the Life of This World, The Nightmare of Disbelief, Knowing the Truth, Eternity Has Already Begun, Timelessness and the Reality of Fate, Matter: Another Name for Illusion, The Little Man in the Tower, Islam and the Philosophy of Karma, The Dark Magic of Darwinism, The Religion of Darwinism, The Collapse of the Theory of Evolution in 20 Questions, Engineering in Nature, Technology Mimics Nature, The Impasse of Evolution I (Encyclopedic), The Impasse of Evolution II (Encyclopedic), Allah is Known Through Reason, The Qur'an Leads the Way to Science, The Real Origin of Life, Consciousness in the Cell, Technology Imitates Nature, A String of Miracles, The Creation of the Universe, Miracles of the Qur'an, The Design in Nature, Self-Sacrifice and Intelligent Behaviour Models in Animals, The End of Darwinism, Deep Thinking, Never Plead Ignorance, The Green Miracle: Photosynthesis, The Miracle in the Cell, The Miracle in the Eye, The Miracle in the Spider, The Miracle in the Gnat, The Miracle in the Ant, The Miracle of the Immune System, The Miracle of Creation in Plants, The Miracle in the Atom, The Miracle in the Honeybee, The Miracle of Seed, The Miracle of Hormone, The Miracle of the Termite, The Miracle of the Human Body, The Miracle of Man's Creation, The Miracle of Protein, The Miracle of Smell and Taste, The Miracle of Microworld, The Secrets of DNA.*

The author's childrens books are: *Wonders of Allah's Creation, The World of Animals, The Glory in the Heavens, Wonderful Creatures, Let's Learn Our Islam, The Miracles in Our Bodies, The World of Our Little Friends: The Ants, Honeybees That Build Perfect Combs, Skillful Dam Builders: Beavers.*

The author's other works on Quranic topics include: *The Basic Concepts in the Qur'an, The Moral Values of the Qur'an, Quick Grasp of Faith 1-2-3, Ever Thought About the Truth?, Crude Understanding of Disbelief, Devoted to Allah, Abandoning the Society of Ignorance, The Real Home of Believers: Paradise, Knowledge of the Qur'an, Qur'an Index, Emigrating for the Cause of Allah, The Character of the Hypocrite in the Qur'an, The Secrets of the Hypocrite, The Names of Allah, Communicating the Message and Disputing in the Qur'an, Answers from the Qur'an, Death Resurrection Hell, The Struggle of the Messengers, The Avowed Enemy of Man: Satan, The Greatest Slander: Idolatry, The Religion of the Ignorant, The Arrogance of Satan, Prayer in the Qur'an, The Theory of Evolution, The Importance of Conscience in the Qur'an, The Day of Resurrection, Never Forget, Disregarded Judgements of the Qur'an, Human Characters in the Society of Ignorance, The Importance of Patience in the Qur'an, General Information from the Qur'an, The Mature Faith, Before You Regret, Our Messengers Say, The Mercy of Believers, The Fear of Allah, Jesus Will Return, Beauties Presented by the Qur'an for Life, A Bouquet of the Beauties of Allah 1-2-3-4, The Iniquity Called "Mockery," The Mystery of the Test, The True Wisdom According to the Qur'an, The Struggle Against the Religion of Irreligion, The School of Yusuf, The Alliance of the Good, Slanders Spread Against Muslims Throughout History, The Importance of Following the Good Word, Why Do You Deceive Yourself?, Islam: The Religion of Ease, Zeal and Enthusiasm Described in the Qur'an, Seeing Good in All, How do the Unwise Interpret the Qur'an?, Some Secrets of the Qur'an, The Courage of Believers, Being Hopeful in the Qur'an, Justice and Tolerance in the Qur'an, Basic Tenets of Islam, Those Who do not Listen to the Qur'an, Taking the Qur'an as a Guide, A Lurking Threat: Heedlessness, Sincerity in the Qur'an, The Religion of Worshipping People, The Methods of the Liar in the Qur'an.*

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Fax: +65 - 63384213
E-Mail: shafinah @ singnet.com.sg
shafqld @ singnet.com.sg

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By Harun Yahya
Edited By: Dr. Ajmal M. Razak

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Website:
www.harunyahya.com
E-mail:
info@harunyahya.com

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INTRODUCTION



As you read these lines, wars are going on in all corners of the world. People are being forced from their homes, dying and being maimed, injured or disabled. In heavy rain and severe cold, refugees struggling to walk to their destination hundreds of miles away are being threatened with starvation, epidemics and death, while those who are responsible for such misery sleep soundly in their warm beds. These events do not evoke a speck of guilty conscience in them. A look at some of the countries in the world in general today reveals that justice has become a tool which is applied at will by minorities who possess material wealth. If they only "came to reason," they would then extend a helping hand to the desperate, and would exercise justice. In all corners of the world, some people have ended up on welfare because of abuse of power, unjust earnings and exploitation of the poor. While punishment is inflicted on the innocent, the real offenders are awarded respect and admiration.

In brief, injustice wins out in many countries all over the world.

What is the justification for this? Don't people feel the

need for just administrations?

When we talk about justice, everybody shares essentially the same basic concepts, and these are accepted by the majority of people right away. This justice will include people from all walks of life, with no discrimination between them. It will allocate resources fairly among people, without taking their race, religion and language into consideration and will aim to create a world in which the superior is the one who is right, not the powerful.

What often distances people from justice is their rejection of it. They may concur in principle, but they reject it when it conflicts with their own interests. Everyone, for instance, spurns bribery and in theory agrees that taking bribes is immoral. However, faced with an attractive offer of a bribe, some people fabricate "justifications" and violate the principles they theoretically agree with.

Similarly, everybody knows and agrees that in finding out the truth and in the establishment of justice, the authenticity of witness statements are of major importance. In courts, however, some people whose evidence is given may readily lie and mislead the jury when their own interests or the interests of someone they love are at stake. These people accept justice in principle, yet see no reason not to violate it when the truth and their personal interests turn out to be at odds. Alternatively, everybody agrees that public resources should be shared equally. However, the recipients of an "aid campaign" may attempt to take a greater share and even tread over others to accomplish that. In this case, too, personal interests supersede justice.

The examples are legion. Yet we ultimately face the very

same truth: even if some people believe in the necessity of justice, they may violate it when their interests are at stake. Since people with such mentalities are in the majority in some societies, justice remains an illusionary concept.

For due administration of justice over the world, a morality which will enable people to set aside their personal benefits for the sake of justice is needed.

This morality is the values of the Qur'an which God commands and instructs us with in the Qur'an. That is because the values of the Qur'an command an absolute justice that makes no discrimination between people, that sides only with what is true and just. In Sura Nisa, God commands people to rule with justice, even if it works against themselves:

O You who believe! Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for God alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives. Whether they are rich or poor, God is well able to look after them. Do not follow your own desires and deviate from the truth. If you twist or turn away, God is aware of what you do. (Qur'an, 4:135)

As the verse maintains, justice that is carried out with the fear of God and with the sole intention of earning God's approval is true justice. This form of justice makes no discrimination between people. When such justice is the main goal, neither one's personal interests, kinship, enmity, outlook on life, language, colour, nor race will influence his decisions. He will decide only in favour of righteousness. In societies in which people live by the values of the Qur'an, it is certain that people will enjoy true justice, peace and trust. Only someone who fears God and knows that he will be

questioned on the Day of Judgement can exercise true justice.

Indeed, history confirms this fact. As God informs us in the verse, **"Among those We have created there is a community who guide by the Truth and act justly according to it"** (Qur'an, 7:181), throughout history there have been times when justice prevailed. The prophets and numerous just leaders who followed in their footsteps established peaceful societies, thereby creating a role model for the world to emulate. Both the Seljuk Turks and the Ottoman Empire ensured the co-existence of people of different religions and nations under one flag. Muslim Turks were known for their justice in the lands they ruled. Due to their tolerant, peaceable and compassionate attitudes, they were received with joy by the natives of conquered lands.

The purpose of this book is to describe the justice in the Qur'an. Yet bear in mind that to attain such a peaceable life, and one full of trust, you must also make your own efforts. For a peaceful life which will also secure a just and secure environment for the next generation, you, more than anyone else, must administer your own justice and thus become a role model for others. There is an opportunity ahead to be one of those who **"command justice."** (Qur'an, 3: 21) Never forget that **"... God loves the just."** (Qur'an, 5:42)

GOD COMMANDS US TO BE JUST



The true justice described in the Qur'an commands man to behave justly, not discriminating between people, protecting others' rights and not permitting violence, no matter what the circumstances, to side with the oppressed against the oppressor and to help the needy. This justice calls for the rights of both parties to be protected when reaching a decision in a dispute, assessing all aspects of an incident, setting aside all prejudices, being objective, honest, tolerant, merciful and compassionate. In the event one fails to display any of these characteristics or attaches greater importance to a particular one, then it becomes hard to exercise true justice. For instance, someone who cannot assess events in a moderate way, and who is swayed by his emotions and feelings, will fail to arrive at sound decisions and will remain under the influence of those feelings. However, someone who rules with justice needs to set all his personal feelings and views aside. He needs to treat all parties with justice when they ask for help, to side with what is right under all circumstances, and not to diverge from the

path of honesty and truthfulness. A person should incorporate the values of the Qur'an into his soul in such a way that he may be able to consider the interests of other parties before his own and maintain justice, even if this harms his own interests.

O You who believe! Show integrity for the sake of God, bearing witness with justice. Do not let hatred for a people incite you into not being just. Be just. That is closer to faith. Heed God [alone]. God is aware of what you do. (Qur'an, 5:8)

As the above verse suggests, God knows everything a man does. A person who fears God and who is aware that he will have to account for his deeds on the Day of Judgement issues his commands in a just way in order to earn the good pleasure of God. He knows that all his words and thoughts will be judged on the Day of Judgement and will be rewarded accordingly.

For this reason, what one has to do to earn the good pleasure of God, to be saved from the torment of Hell and to attain the infinite favours of Paradise is to fully live by the Qur'an. In order to attain this morality, everyone must make personal efforts and set aside all his selfish desires and personal interests and adopt the guidance of justice, compassion, tolerance and peace. God gives a detailed description of true justice in the Qur'an and informs us that all sorts of disagreements can be solved by the maintenance of justice. In a society made up of righteous administrators and just people, it is obvious that all problems can be readily overcome. In the Qur'an, God gives a detailed description of justice and informs believers of the attitude they have to

adopt in the face of incidents they encounter and of the ways to exercise justice. Such guidance is a great comfort to believers and a mercy from God. For this reason, those who believe are responsible for exercising justice in an undivided manner both to earn God's approval and to lead their lives in peace and security.

Justice Should Be Exercised Equally Among All People, With No Consideration of Language, Race, or Ethnicity

A close examination of developments all over the world reveals that the performance of justice varies according to place, time and people. For instance, in some societies, the colour of someone's skin influences decisions. Even under the very same circumstances, the same decision may not apply to a white and a black man. In some societies, race is of great importance to people. In the 20th century, Hitler's annihilation of millions of people solely because he deemed the Aryan race superior to other races is a good example of this. In our day, too, there are people being subjected to cruel and unjust treatment because of the colour of their skin or their race. In the United States and South Africa, black people were for many years treated as second-class citizens, and savage conflicts raged in many Asian and African countries simply because of racial differences.

However, God informs us in the Qur'an that the purpose in the creation of different tribes and peoples is "**that they should come to know each other**" (Qur'an, 49: 13). Different nations or peoples, all of whom are the servants of God, should get to know one another, that is, learn about their

different cultures, languages, traditions and abilities. In brief, the purpose of the creation of different races and nations is not conflict and war but cultural richness. Such variation is a bounty of God's creation. The fact that someone is taller than someone else or that his skin is yellow or white neither makes him superior to others nor is something to feel ashamed of. Every trait a person has is a result of God's purposeful creation, but in the sight of God, these variations have no ultimate importance. A believer knows that someone attains superiority only by fearing God and in the strength of his faith in God. This fact is related in the following verse:

O Mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you might come to know each other. The noblest among you in God's sight is that one of you who best performs his duty. God is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Qur'an, 49:13)

As God informs us in that verse, the justice ordained by Him calls for equal, tolerant and peaceable treatment of everyone, with no discrimination.

In his time, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) treated people of different races and places with the utmost justice. He severely criticised subjecting people to different treatment because of their race, and attributed such acts to the "morality of the ignorant."

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) reminded his people that people in ignorant societies may harbour enmity towards other people because of their colour or race, and warned all Muslims against such an attitude, which is described as "ugly" in the Qur'an.

1,400 years ago, all these primitive ideas were abolished through the Qur'an, which was sent to mankind as a mercy, and it was proclaimed that all people, regardless of their colour, race and language, are equal. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) criticised the unbecoming practice of people of ignorant societies who assessed others according to their race and colour. He cautioned the Arab people in these words in his last address to them:

An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black, nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety and good action.

With these words, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) once again reminded all mankind the fact related in Sura Hujurat, verse 13; that superiority among people is attainable only through fear of God. Islam, as the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) also stresses, completely abolishes all these primitive ideas. In an environment where the values of Islam are established, a man cannot be accused, subjected to discriminatory treatment or oppressed because he is a Jew, a black or an Indian. God decides what race a person should belong to. He shaped man in the most perfect manner. Man's duty is always to be just, tolerant, respectful, compassionate to and at peace with everyone.

This aside, the fact that a person is well-off or poor does not pose a hindrance to a believer's provision of justice or the way he makes his decisions. It is utterly unacceptable that someone should oppress other people just because he possesses the financial means, and hence be allowed to get away with committing a crime. However, in our day a look

at some of the countries in the world reveals a mentality that favours the rights of the wealthy and treats the poor as second-class citizens. Accordingly, some wealthy people benefit more from justice and deem it as their right to be favoured over the poor. Furthermore, they try to make judicial mechanisms work for their own interests. This mentality causes great injustice in societies where people do not live by religion; while some people struggle to survive in misery, others enjoy the benefits of being wealthy.

However, despite this adverse situation, it is possible to establish justice and social peace. The dominance of the values of the Qur'an and peoples' unyielding insistence on living by the values of the Qur'an can make this possible. God issues the following commands in the Qur'an:

... Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for God alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives. Whether they are rich or poor, God is well able to look after them. Do not follow your own desires and deviate from the truth.... (Qur'an, 4:135)

In compliance with this command of God, whether a person is wealthy or poor, he who has fear of God exercises absolute justice, and his attitude never changes in line with peoples' financial status. He knows that being rich or poor is a worldly state of affairs by which God tests man. When one dies, nothing will remain from his possessions, and only his fear of God will be rewarded. The attitude which pleases God is described in the Qur'an: being just, honest and righteous. The reward for this morality is eternal gifts in the hereafter.

In Matters Related to Orphans, God Commands Definite Justice

Another example given in the Qur'an regarding the maintenance of justice relates to the management of the property of orphans. In the Qur'an, God commands that the property of orphans be managed in the most just manner until they grow old enough to manage it themselves. In Sura An'am, God commands:

And that you do not go near the property of orphans before they reach maturity—except in a good way; that you give full measure and full weight with justice... (Qur'an, 6:152)

In many other verses, God reminds people not to dissipate the assets of orphans quickly before they reach maturity, and to act in a just way. Some of these verses are as follows:

Give orphans their property, and do not substitute bad things for good. Do not assimilate their property into your own. Doing that is a serious crime. (Qur'an, 4:2)

Keep a close check on orphans until they reach a marriageable age, then if you perceive that they have sound judgement hand over their property to them. Do not consume it extravagantly and precipitately before they come of age. Those who are wealthy should abstain from it altogether. Those who are poor should use it sensibly and correctly. When you hand over their property to them ensure that there are witnesses on their behalf. God suffices as a Reckoner. (Qur'an, 4:6)

Do not go near the property of orphans before they reach maturity, except in a good way. Fulfil your contracts. Contracts will be asked about. (Qur'an, 17:34)

Those who consume the property of orphans unjustly, in a manner that conflicts with these verses, and spend it unfairly are warned of a punishment which will last for all eternity. In the verse **"People who consume the property of orphans wrongfully consume nothing in their bellies except fire. They will roast in a Searing Blaze."** (Qur'an, 4:10), God forbids people to commit injustice. As this example also reveals, justice in the Qur'anic sense relates to all domains of life. The meticulousness one shows in performing justice, on the other hand, is an important factor that influences one's rewards in the hereafter.

The Believer is Responsible for Exercising Justice, Even if its Consequences Work Against Him, His Parents or Relatives

Seeing a definition of justice, you may think how easy it is to act justly, and you might feel quite content because you have always made just decisions. However, would it still be so easy for you to act justly if the consequences of your just decision were to harm you, your parents or loved ones, either physically or spiritually? Would you still manage to be objective, just and honest when judging a loved one who had swerved from the right path?

In the face of such a question, many people vacillate. Indeed, such a decision may be very difficult for some. They may simply be more tolerant to a loved one and ignore the facts. Yet what matters is not to depart from justice, no matter what the circumstances and conditions may be, and to meticulously comply with the verse, **"O You who believe! Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for God alone, even**

against yourselves or your parents and relatives..." (Qur'an, 4:135) What earns peoples' trust is this unswerving commitment to justice they observe. Protecting people because of kinship or friendship creates unease and insecurity. Observing such a disposition in leaders in particular causes great social unrest.

Someone who acts in conformity with the laws of the Qur'an, however, follows the recommendation of God: **"...that you are equitable when you speak—even if a near relative is concerned; and that you fulfil God's contract. That is what He instructs you to do, so that hopefully you will pay heed."** (Qur'an, 6:152). This conduct is the manifestation of one's strong faith in God and the moral perfection he displays.

In the Qur'an, one example is related from the life of the Prophet Musa. The verse reads:

He entered the city at a time when its inhabitants were unaware and found two men fighting there—one from his party and the other from his enemy. The one from his party asked for his support against the other from his enemy. So Musa hit him, dealing him a fatal blow. He said, "This is part of Satan's doing. He truly is an outright and misleading enemy." (Qur'an, 28:15)

In this story, the Prophet Musa witnesses two men fighting, one of them from his own tribe. He sides with the one from his party and strikes the man from the other party. He does not intend to kill him, but the man dies from the blow. The Prophet Musa realises that he has erred. This is an important example clarifying the concept of justice that a believer must adopt. It also conveys to us the message that if someone is in the wrong it is unjust to support him simply

because of kinship or friendship. As a matter of fact, the Prophet Musa (pbuh) in this case immediately realises the truth and calls his action "Satan's doing".

Indeed, the "feeling of factionalism", which the Prophet Musa describes as "Satan's doing", is responsible for all the bloodshed throughout history. Man's obsession to prove the righteousness of his family, tribe, ethnic group, followers or his race at all cost, with no consideration of justice, has been the main source of numerous conflicts and wars.

The attitude a believer must assume in the face of such incitement is also related in the Qur'an by referring to the exemplary life of the Prophet Musa (pbuh). When he exercised his conscience, the Prophet Musa readily realised that this unfavourable feeling was a form of cruelty, repented for the sin he had committed under Satan's temptation and took refuge in God. This exemplary and conscientious conduct is related in the Qur'an thus:

He said, "My Lord, I have wronged myself. Forgive me." So He forgave him. He is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful. He said, "My Lord, because of Your blessing to me, I will never be a supporter of evildoers." (Qur'an, 28:16-17)

Hatred Felt Towards a Community Does Not Prevent Believers From Exercising Justice

Hatred and anger are the major sources of evil, and are likely to prevent people from making just decisions, thinking soundly and conducting themselves rationally. Some people can readily inflict all kinds of injustice on people for whom they feel enmity. They may accuse these people of acts they

have never committed or bear false witness against them, although their innocence is known to them. On account of such enmity, many people may be subjected to unbearable oppression. Some people avoid bearing witness in favour of people they disagree with, although they know they are innocent, and they keep evidence which would reveal their innocence hidden. Furthermore, they take pleasure in the misery these people face, their encounters with injustice or great suffering. Their greatest worry, on the other hand, is that justice should be done and these peoples' innocence proved.

For these reasons, it is very hard for people in corrupt societies to trust one another. People worry about falling victim to someone else all the time. Having lost mutual trust, they also lose their human feelings, such as tolerance, compassion, brotherhood and co-operation, and start hating one another.

However, the feelings someone holds in his heart towards a person or community should never influence a believer's decisions. No matter how immoral or hostile the person he is considering may be, the believer sets all these feelings aside and acts and makes his decisions justly and recommends that which is just. His feelings towards that person cast no shadow over his wisdom and conscience. His conscience always inspires him to comply with God's commands and advice, and not to abandon good manners, because this is God's command in the Qur'an. In Sura Ma'ida, it is related as follows:

O You who believe! Show integrity for the sake of God, bearing witness with justice. Do not let hatred for a people incite you into not being just. Be just. That is closer to faith. Heed God [alone]. God is aware of what you do. (Qur'an, 5:8)

As is related in the verse, displaying a just attitude is what most reflects having fear of God. A person of faith knows that he will attain the pleasure of God only when he acts justly. Every person who witnesses his or her good manners will trust this person, feel comfortable in their presence and trust them with any responsibility or task. Such people are treated with respect even by their enemies. Their attitude may even lead some people to have faith in God.

The best example to follow for believers in our day is also the actions of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as described in the Qur'an. Similar to the Blessed Period of the first community of Islam—an age of well-being when people in general adhered to the Qur'an—in our day, too, people of different beliefs such as Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, atheists, idolaters and pagans live together. A Muslim is responsible for being tolerant, forgiving, just and humane towards people, regardless of who they may be. It is probable that in time everyone will place his faith in God, become a Muslim and surrender himself to God. A believer should always bear this fact in mind. The responsibility of a believer is to summon people to God's religion with a favourable, peaceful and tolerant attitude. The decision to follow divine guidance and have faith rests with another party. Compelling a person to have faith and forcing him to do things are against the Qur'an. God states the following about this:

There is no compulsion in religion. True guidance has become clearly distinct from error. Anyone who rejects false deities and has belief in God has grasped the Firmest Handhold, which will never give way. God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Qur'an, 2:256)

THE PROPHETS HAVE BROUGHT JUSTICE



For the majority of people, an environment where the justice referred to in the foregoing sections prevails seems utopian, an illusory concept that can only exist in the realms of literature. This attitude denies that a society in which there is real justice is possible. Nevertheless, history has witnessed periods when justice ordained in the Qur'an was built up and real peace, tolerance and security pervaded human relations.

In communities to which the messengers of God were sent, social relations were marked by great tolerance, peace and justice. As God informs us, **"Every nation has a Messenger and when their Messenger comes everything is decided between them justly. They are not wronged"** (Qur'an, 10:47). No one was oppressed in their times, and true justice prevailed among people.

God commands all His messengers to administer justice with no consideration of race and ethnicity. The books revealed to the Prophet Isa' (Jesus), Musa (Moses) and Dawud (David) summoned people to good morals, tolerance, peace and trust, as did the Qur'an revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). The following verse makes it clear that one of the reasons why messengers are sent is "to establish justice":

We sent Our Messengers with the Clear Signs and sent down the Book and the Balance with them so that mankind might establish justice. (Qur'an, 57:25)

In the Qur'an, one of the prophets who is told to display exemplary conduct in ruling with justice is the Prophet Dawud. Two litigants came to the Prophet Dawud requesting him to judge between them with truth:

Has the story of the litigants reached you? How they climbed up to the Upper Room and came in on Dawud who was alarmed by them. They said, "Do not be afraid. We are two litigants, one of whom has acted unjustly towards the other, so judge between us with truth and do not be unjust and guide us to the Right Path. This brother of mine has ninety-nine ewes and I have only one." He said, "Let me have charge of it," and got the better of me with his words. (Qur'an, 38:21-23)

As stated in the verse, the two litigants asked God's Prophet not to be unjust while judging between them and to guide them to the right path. They trusted in his justice and submitted themselves to his verdict. The answer of the Prophet Dawud was as follows:

He said, "He has wronged you by asking for your ewe to add to his ewes. Truly many partners are unjust to one another—except those who believe and do right actions, and how few they are!"... (Qur'an, 38:24)

This decision of the Prophet Dawud sets a very good example for believers since he sided with the person who was in the right, rather than the more powerful one, and hence acted justly. In the 25th verse of the same Sura, the moral perfection displayed by the Prophet Dawud is praised, and he is given the glad tidings of a good homecoming as **"he has nearness to Us and a good Homecoming"**. In the 26th verse, God reminds the Prophet Dawud of the importance of justice:

...We have made you a caliph on the earth, so judge between people with truth and do not follow your own desires, letting them misguide you from the Way of God. Those who are misguided from the Way of God will receive a harsh punishment because they forgot the Day of Reckoning.

The people of Shu'aib, who were sent to Madyan, were a tribe that acted unjustly in commercial life. They manipulated peoples' assets, devalued their goods and defrauded them. The Prophet Shu'aib warned his people of their unjust attitudes and called them to justice. In one verse God states the following regarding this matter:

And to Madyan We sent their brother Shu'ayb who said, "My people, worship God! You have no other deity than Him. A Clear Sign has come to you from your Lord. Give full measure and full weight. Do not

diminish people's goods. Do not cause corruption in the land after it has been put right. That is better for you if you are believers." (Qur'an, 7:85)

In another verse, the Prophet Shu'aib reminds his people that honest earnings are better for them, and tells them to exercise justice:

My people! Give full measure and full weight with justice; do not diminish people's goods; and do not go about the earth, corrupting it. What endures with God is better for you if you are believers. I am not set over you as your keeper. (Qur'an, 11:85-86)

In the Qur'an, God gives many examples related to the just attitudes displayed by the Prophet Musa, the Prophet Isa', the Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) and other prophets, and the way they invited their people to do good is explained in detail.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), too, administered justice among his people in compliance with the verse, **"...Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for God alone..."** (Qur'an, 4:135). His utmost meticulousness in the administration of justice and his moral perfection were the main reason why people placed unshakeable trust in him and committed themselves to God's religion. Furthermore, during the first years of the revelation of the Quran, seeing the Prophet Muhammad's moral perfection and justice, many prominent disbelievers submitted themselves to him and converted to Islam.

Such examples are legion in the life of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), many of which have been conveyed to

us in historical accounts and the sayings of the Prophet (*hadith*). His just, tolerant, compassionate attitudes became very good examples to follow for Muslims in every age. There are divine purposes in his words, attitudes and practises. God relates the moral perfection of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the great care he showed to believers as follows:

**A Messenger has come to you from among yourselves.
Your suffering is distressing to him; he is deeply
concerned for you; he is gentle and merciful to the
believers. (Qur'an, 9:128)**

The Exemplary Life of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

God commands His messengers to maintain justice among people. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the last messenger, started to spread the religion of Islam in Mecca, where he received the revelations, with a just attitude.

At that period, the Arabian Peninsula, and especially Mecca, was shaken by social problems. In the period preceding the Blessed Period, which is called the "The Age of Ignorance," there was severe discrimination between races and religions. Disputes among tribes, an unjust economic order, plundering, intolerant attitudes between members of different religions, differences between the poor and the wealthy and many other injustices were the natural consequences of such discrimination. The maintenance of justice could not be established, the poor were oppressed by those in power, and were subjected to violence because of

their race, religion or language. People were forced to work under very hard conditions, and were virtually tortured.

In commercial life, under the burden of the interest-ridden system, small-scale businesses disappeared, whereas the wealthy tended to extravagant consumption. Some of these immoral acts became almost like traditions. For instance, the Arabs of the ignorant age who raided and plundered commercial caravans sold their spoils at very low prices and influenced market conditions. Sometimes, they kept these goods deliberately and generated a black market.

In the Qur'an, God gives information about the desert Arabs who made up the majority of society before the time of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). This society's disinclination to comply with the words of the messenger is related in the following verse:

The desert Arabs are the worst in disbelief and hypocrisy, and more fitted to be ignorant of the limits which God has sent down to His Messenger. But God is Knowing, Wise. (Qur'an, 9:97)

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was sent to such ignorant people to summon them to good morals and the right path. No difficulty could shake his commitment. He communicated God's message to a tribe which was particularly inclined to disbelief, and was throughout his life a role model for them. As also stated in the verse below, he called on his people to be just:

Say: "My Lord has commanded justice..." (Qur'an, 7:29)

The message of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), coupled with his good morals, had a great impact all over the Arabian

Peninsula, and people converted to Islam in great numbers. The just commands of the Qur'an good morals, tolerance, peace and a peaceful social order—prevailed during his time. One of the most important reasons for this is that, in compliance with the verse, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) observed social justice without discriminating between people:

God commands you to return to their owners the things you hold in trust and, when you judge between people, to judge with justice. How excellent is what God exhorts you to do! God is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. (Qur'an, 4:58)

One example is the contract the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) signed with the people of Najran, who were among the people of the Book. This text reveals an exercise of justice which was unprecedented in that age. The article of the pact of Najran, *"If any one of the people of Najran demands his rights, justice shall be done between the plaintiff and respondent. Neither oppression shall be allowed to be perpetrated on them, nor shall they be permitted to oppress any one"*¹, manifest the kind of justice people enjoyed at that time. Due to this unprecedented administration, people placed strong trust in God's messenger, and even his most terrible enemies could not help being impressed by the Prophet's honesty.

These examples of good morals which appeared as a consequence of the Prophet Muhammad's meticulously observing God's commands also reflect the tolerant, peaceful order God's messengers introduced to social life. In a society where people comply with the values of the Qur'an

meticulously, it is obvious that a peaceful life will be secured.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) Opposed All Forms of Racism

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) upheld justice in his time and rejected the ignorant belief which considered some people superior to others because of their language, race, social status or ethnicity. That is because such discrimination is severely condemned in the Qur'an. "Racism," as defined in our day, is an idea God prohibits in the Qur'an, but which receives extensive support in ignorant societies. As mentioned earlier, one of the divine purposes in the creation of the different races is **"that they should come to know each other."** In the sight of God, all people are equal, and the only superiority anyone can have over anyone else is his fear of God and faith in Him.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) also declared to his people, who committed racism, that ethnic differences had no importance and that everyone was equal in the eyes of God. He repeatedly underlined that all that mattered was having sincere faith. While summoning his people to have faith, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) commanded them not to discriminate in his last sermon:

O people! Your God is one and your forefather (Adam) is one. An Arab is not better than a non-Arab and a non-Arab is not better than an Arab, and a red (i.e. white tinged with red) person is not better than a black person and a black person is not better than a red person, except in piety. Indeed the noblest among you is the one who is deeply conscious of God.²

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) also told people that God created man from nothing, that everyone is created equal and that everyone will give account of his deeds all alone before God. For this reason, he added that it would be a great wrong to look for superiority in one's descent.

The Prophet (pbuh) commanded thus:

*(All of) you are children of Adam, and Adam is from dust. Let some men cease to take pride in others.*³

The Prophet (pbuh) stated that no criteria except for heedfulness are acceptable:

*Your descent is nothing to be proud of. Nor does it bring you superiority. O people! All of you are the children of Adam. You are like equal wheat grains in a bowl ... No one has any superiority over anyone else, except in religion and heedfulness. In order to consider someone a wicked person, it suffices that he humiliates other people, is mean with money, bad-tempered and exceeds the limits.*⁴

Throughout his life, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) advised his people to set aside their ignorant and perverse values and to live by the Qur'an. In the Qur'an, racist attitudes are defined as "fanatical rage," and people's ambitious attitudes are criticised. A related verse reads:

Those who disbelieve filled their hearts with fanatical rage—the fanatical rage of the Time of Ignorance—and God sent down serenity to His Messenger and to the believers, and obliged them to respect the formula of heedfulness which they had most right to and were most entitled to. God has knowledge of all things. (Qur'an, 48:26)

Muslims who obeyed God's call in the above verse led

their lives in peace and security, both during the Blessed Period of the first community of Islam and in succeeding ages when just administrators reigned.

In the Period of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), Contracts Signed with the People of the Book and the Pagans Secured Justice in Society

After the migration of the Prophet (pbuh) from Mecca to Medina, he encountered many different communities. At that period, Jews, Christians and pagans who held power were all living together. Under such circumstances, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) united the cosmopolitan structure to secure social unity and peace by making social agreements—either by sending letters or holding face-to-face meetings—with more than a hundred communities, and thus achieved social compromise.⁵ Prof. Thomas Arnold stresses the importance of the social unity established by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in these words:

*Arabia that had never before obeyed one prince, suddenly exhibits a political unity and swears allegiance to the will of an absolute ruler. Out of the numerous tribes, big and small, of a hundred different kinds that were incessantly at feud with one another, Muhammad's word created a nation.*⁶

As is related in many verses in the Qur'an, living in peace with people of other religions is perceived as good by Islam. In one verse, God commands Muslims to believe in all the holy books revealed by Him and respect their beliefs:

So call and go straight as you have been ordered to. Do

not follow their whims and desires but say, "I believe in whatever God has sent down [in the form] of a Book and I am ordered to be just between you. God is our Lord and your Lord. We have our actions and you have your actions. There is no debate between us and you. God will gather us all together. He is our final destination." (Qur'an, 42:15)

The above verse describes the relations a Muslim should establish with people of other religions. Muslims are also held responsible for adopting the morality of the prophet and being tolerant and just towards other people. This person can be anyone, a Buddhist, a Jew, a Christian or even an atheist. Such honest and just attitudes will make a very positive impact on their hearts, no matter what or who they believe in—or even if they have no beliefs at all—and they will become a means to make them feel closer to Islam.

The Prophet's migration to Medina and his administration there were marked by brotherhood and tolerance, and proved that a peaceful life among groups of people of different religions, races and languages is possible. The fact that the first text the Prophet (pbuh) dictated was a peace agreement provides evidence for the fact that he was committed to the establishment of peace and tolerance. Following his conquest of Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) released even those who had formerly tortured Muslims, and was tolerant towards them. This superior morality of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was unprecedented in Arab society, and was greatly appreciated by people.

At that time, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) also became

a role model for all believers regarding the establishment of true justice in conquered countries. Towards the natives of these lands, he exercised the justice described in the Qur'an and made agreements which pleased the parties involved. The fact that no party suffered even minor injustice was the distinctive feature of these agreements. For this reason, no matter which race or religion they belonged to, the people of conquered countries were always pleased with the justice introduced by Islam.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the companions of the Prophet, peace be upon them all, were people who ensured justice among people, as the verse stresses: **"Among those We have created there is a community who guide by the Truth and act justly according to it."** (Qur'an, 7:181)

In the contract made with the Christians of Najran, who lived in South Arabia, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) demonstrates one of the best examples of tolerance and justice. The contract included the following article:

The lives of the people of Najran and its surrounding area, their religion, their land, property, cattle and those of them who are present or absent, their messengers and their places of worship are under the protection of Allah and guardianship of His Prophet.⁷

By means of such contracts, the Messenger of God secured a social order for Muslims and the People of the Book alike, which was marked by peace and security. This order was a total manifestation of the following verse:

Those who believe, those who are Jews, and the Christians and Sabaeans, all who believe in God and the Last Day and act rightly, will have their reward

with their Lord. They will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. (Qur'an, 2:62)

The examples cited above are only a few of the measures implemented by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) that show the way he exercised justice. However, the most important of these contracts is the Constitution of Medina signed by Jews and pagan communities. This contract is still the subject of many articles today, and is closely examined.

The Constitution of Medina was prepared under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) 1,400 years ago, that is in 622 AD, to meet the needs of people of different beliefs, and was put into practice as a written legal contract. Different communities of different religions and races that had harboured deep-seated enmity towards one another for 120 years became parties to this legal contract. By means of this contract, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) showed that conflicts between those societies, which had been enemies and quite unable to reach any form of compromise, could come to an end, and they could actually live side by side.

According to the Constitution of Medina, everyone was free to adhere to any belief or religion or to make any political or philosophical choice. People sharing the same views could come together and form a community. Everyone was free to exercise his own justice system. However, anyone who committed a crime would be protected by no-one. The parties to the contract would co-operate and provide support for each other, and remain under the protection of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Conflicts between the parties would be brought to the Messenger of God.

This contract remained in force from 622 to 632 AD. Through this document, tribal structures which had formerly been based on blood and kinship were abolished, and people of different cultural, ethnical and geographical backgrounds came together and formed a social unity. The Constitution of Medina secured absolute religious freedom. This freedom was articulated in the following article:

*The Jews of Banu 'Awf are a community along with the believers. To the Jews their religion and to the Muslims their religion.*⁸

This contract granted the right of membership to Jews, and the idolator communities as well. Article 16 reads: "The Jew who follows us is surely entitled to our support and the same equal rights as any one of us. He shall not be wronged nor his enemy be assisted."⁹ The companions of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) also strictly adhered to this mentality and granted this right to Berbers, Buddhists, Brahmans and other similar communities. During this period, disputes were easily resolved, everyone respected other people's beliefs, and peace and justice prevailed for a long period of time.

The Prophet (pbuh) also made contracts with pagans as well as the people of the Book. Pagans were always treated with justice, and when they asked for protection, their requests were readily accepted by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

This meant that these communities sought the protection of the Prophet (pbuh) in the face of an attack or a wrongful accusation. Throughout his life, many non-Muslims and pagans requested protection from the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), and he took them under his protection and ensured

their security. In Sura Tawba, God states that requests of pagans seeking protection be accepted by believers. Of this, God says the following:

If any of the associators ask you for protection, give them protection until they have heard the words of God. Then convey them to a place where they are safe.... As long as they are straight with you, be straight with them. God loves those who do their duty. (Qur'an, 9:6-7)

As the verse also suggests, God asks believers to assume a just attitude towards pagans and holds them responsible for ensuring their security in the event they seek protection from believers.

The People of the Book In the Period of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

When we examine the relations of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) with the people of the Book during the first years of Islam, we see that he co-operated with Christians. When Muslims were subjected to cruelty by pagans in Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) told them to migrate to Ethiopia, a place where Christians lived at that time. King Negus, the Christian ruler of that country, accepted the migrant Muslims and protected them against oppression.

The Qur'an also gives the example of Isa's disciples to other believers for their loyalty to God and His messenger. There are also striking similarities between the first Muslims

and the first Christians. The communities who first believed in God always remained faithful to God's messengers, despite being subjected to difficulty and torture. In the Qur'an, God relates that the first Christians in the time of Isa' were sincere Muslims who surrendered themselves to their Lord:

When Isa' sensed disbelief on their part, he said, "Who will be my helpers to God?" The disciples said, "We are God's helpers. We believe in God. Bear witness that we are Muslims." (Qur'an, 3:52)

And when I inspired the Disciples to believe in Me and in My Messenger, they said, "We believe. Bear witness that we are Muslims." (Qur'an, 5:111)

The tolerant attitude adopted by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) towards Jewish communities also sets a good example for all believers. During the period of the Constitution of Medina, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) treated Jews kindly and tolerantly. He encouraged that there be co-operation, counselling and goodness between Muslims and Jews.¹⁰ Indeed, this was put into practice in daily life. This just and tolerant attitude of the Prophet (pbuh) surely applied to all people from all religions and races. Despite treachery, attacks and plots, the Prophet (pbuh) always forgave the perpetrators in compliance with the verse **"those who pardon other people"** (Qur'an, 3:134). And as the verse suggests, **"Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and kindly instruction, and discuss (things) with them in the politest manner..."** (Qur'an, 16:125), he always summoned people to Islam with gracious advice.

In the Period of the Caliphs Justice was Exercised in Compliance With the Qur'an

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the caliphs who succeeded him were also very sensitive regarding exercising justice. In conquered countries, both natives and newcomers led their lives in peace and security. Abu Bakr, the first Caliph, demanded his people to adopt just and tolerant attitudes in these lands. All these attitudes were in compliance with the values of the Qur'an. Abu Bakr gave the following command to his army before the first Syrian expedition:

Stop, O people, that I may give you ten rules to keep by heart: Do not commit treachery, nor depart from the right path. You must not mutilate, neither kill a child or aged man or woman. Do not destroy a palm tree, nor burn it with fire and do not cut any fruitful tree. You must not slay any of the flock or herds or the camels, save for your subsistence. You are likely to pass by people who have devoted their lives to monastic services; leave them to that to which they have devoted their lives. You are likely, likewise, to find people who will present to you meals of many kinds. You may eat; but do not forget to mention the name of Allah.¹¹

Umar ibn al-Khattab, who succeeded Abu Bakr, was famous for his justice and made contracts with the indigenous people of conquered countries, just like the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) did. Each one of these contracts was an example of tolerance and justice. For instance, in his declaration granting protection to Christians in Jerusalem and Lod, he ensured that churches would not be demolished

and guaranteed that Muslims would not worship in churches in groups. Umar granted the same conditions to the Christians of Bethlehem. During the conquest of Medain, the declaration of protection given to the Nestorian Patriarch Isho'yab III (650 - 660 AD) again guaranteed that churches would not be demolished and that no building would be converted into a house or a mosque. The letter written by the patriarch to the bishop of Fars (Persia) after the conquest is most striking, in the sense that it depicts the tolerance and compassion shown by Muslim rulers to the People of the Book in the words of a Christian:

*The Arabs to whom God has given at this time the government of the world... do not persecute the Christian religion. Indeed, they favour it, honour our priests and the saints of the Lord and confer benefits on churches and monasteries.*¹²

The following document by Umar shows us the kind of tolerance God grants to man, provided that he adopts the character traits described in the Qur'an:

*This is the security which 'Umar, the servant of God, the commander of the faithful, grants to the people of Ælia. He grants to all, whether sick or sound, security for their lives, their possessions, their churches and their crosses, and for all that concerns their religion. Their churches shall not be changed into dwelling places, nor destroyed, neither shall they nor their appurtenances be in any way diminished, nor the crosses of the inhabitants nor aught of their possessions, nor shall any constraint be put upon them in the matter of their faith, nor shall any one of them be harmed.*¹³

All these are very important examples revealing the understanding of justice and tolerance of true believers.

By means of the conquests made in the period of caliphs, the communities in these regions were saved from violence and had the opportunity to come to know Islam. However, people were never forced to convert to Islam. As the verse, **"To you your religion, and to me, mine"** (Qur'an, 109:6) suggests, everyone practised their religion freely and never faced any sort of oppression. They learned about the religion of Islam from the practices of Muslim people who observed its principles in their true sense, and thus they were greatly impressed. The majority of these people complied with the sincere call of these pious Muslims, and thus the number of people who converted to Islam increased steadily. For instance, in the time of Abu Bakr, some of the Christians in Kinde and Iyad converted to Islam of their own free will, as did others after the conquest of Damascus.¹⁴

The false assertion that people in conquered countries converted to Islam under threat has also been disproved by Western researchers, and the justice and tolerant attitude of Muslims has been confirmed. L.Browne, a Western researcher, expresses this situation in the following words:

*Incidentally these well-established facts dispose of the idea so widely fostered in Christian writings that the Muslims, wherever they went, forced people to accept Islam at the point of the sword.*¹⁵

In his book *The Prospects of Islam*, Browne goes on to say that the real motive behind the Muslims' conquests was the brotherhood of Islam.

THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK IN THE QUR'AN



There are many nations in the world with different colours, creeds, and languages. These differences, as mentioned earlier, have been a cause of enmity throughout history. The perceived wisdom is that people can never manage to co-exist and that disputes arise wherever such differences exist. However, this is a great misconception and the facts are otherwise. In fact, it is God Who created human beings in different communities and in the Qur'an, He calls all people to peace and security:

O You who believe! Enter absolutely into peace [Islam]. Do not follow in the footsteps of Satan. He is an outright enemy to you. (Qur'an, 2:208)

God calls to the Abode of Peace and He guides whom He wills to a straight path. (Qur'an, 10:25)

All divine religions revealed through God's messengers summon people to have faith in God, recommend them to display moral perfection and warn them against bad morals. Despite the fact that all divine religions—except for Islam—

are distorted, it is evident today that some of their messages are fundamentally the same. That is why these conflicts, which are stirred up artificially, lack reasonable and logical grounds. As stated in the verse above, the main reason for unrest among people is not complying with God's summoning but following in the "footsteps of Satan."

Believers' harbouring hostile feelings to other people who have faith in God is a moral weakness that displeases God, who prohibits all believers from displaying such feelings. He calls on people to establish peace, tolerance and friendship. The Qur'an, revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the last messenger of God, gives believers explicit commands and recommendations on this subject.

The Status of the People of the Book in the Qur'an

In the Qur'an, Jews and Christians, the members of the religions who abide by the Divine Books revealed by God, are called the "People of the Book." What Muslims' views of the People of the Book should be, their relations, and the status of the People of the Book in social life are described in verses and the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in detail. The People of the Book, while they rely basically on God's revelation, have moral precepts and know what is lawful and what is not. For this reason, if one of the People of the Book cooks some food, it is lawful for Muslims to eat it. In the same way, permission has been given to a Muslim man to marry a woman from among the People of the Book. On this subject God commands:

Today all good things have been made lawful for you. And the food of those given the Book is also lawful for you and your food is lawful for them. So are chaste women from among the believers and chaste women of those given the Book before you, once you have given them their dowries in marriage, not in fornication or taking them as lovers. But as for anyone who disbelieves, his actions will come to nothing and in the hereafter he will be among the losers. (Qur'an, 5:5)

Throughout Islamic history, the People of the Book have been always treated with tolerance in Muslim societies. This was particularly evident in the **Ottoman Empire**. It is a well known fact that the Jews, whose rights were denied and were exiled by the Catholic Kingdom of Spain, took refuge in the lands of the Ottoman Empire. As will be dealt with in detail in the following sections, when Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror captured Istanbul, he granted both Christians and Jews all their fundamental rights. Throughout Ottoman history, Jews were regarded as a People of the Book and enjoyed peaceful coexistence with Muslims.

How Should a Muslim Regard Judaism?

As exemplified in the previous pages, throughout his life, the Prophet (pbuh) treated the People of the Book with the utmost tolerance and justice. Thanks to this noble attitude, Abdullah ibn Salam, a prominent rabbi, and his friends converted to Islam and came to believe in his prophethood.

The practices of the Inquisition in European history,

which were a consequence of Christian bigotry, or of anti-Semitism that is itself linked to racist views (hatred of Jews) were never observed in the Islamic world. In the 20th century, however, with Jews embracing Zionism, which is an anti-religious and racist ideology, the Middle East became the scene of conflict and unrest between Jews and Muslims.

There is no doubt that Zionism is a detrimental and harmful ideology for Muslims and world peace alike. It is therefore the duty of every Muslim and person, no matter what his political stance or belief, to struggle against Zionism on intellectual grounds. However, as in the case of any sphere, it is also of vital importance to establish justice and to avoid prejudice. A Muslim must oppose Zionists while ensuring that injustice and oppression are not inflicted on innocent Jews.

As in every form of racism, anti-Semitism is an ideology utterly foreign to Islam. A Muslim opposes all forms of genocide, torture and violence, regardless of religion, race and ethnical origins. A Muslim will never support even the most minor attack on innocent Jews, in the same way he would not approve of any cruel treatment of a member of any other nation. On the contrary, he will denounce it. In the Qur'an, those who make mischief on earth, who subject people to cruelty and those who kill people for no reason are denounced. Some verses on this subject read as follows:

Seek the abode of the hereafter with what God has given you, without forgetting your portion of the world. And do good as God has been good to you. And do not seek to cause corruption in the earth. God does not love corrupters. (Qur'an, 28:77)

Then, is it to be expected of you, if you were put in authority, that you will do mischief in the land, and sever your ties of kinship? Such are the people God has cursed, making them deaf and blinding their eyes. (Qur'an, 47:22-23)

There are only grounds against those who wrong people and act as tyrants in the earth without any right to do so. Such people will have a painful punishment. (Qur'an, 42:42)

In compliance with these commands of God, the rightful reaction felt towards Zionism should not lapse into a kind of an "antagonism towards Jews," and innocent people should not be subjected to such unacceptable reactions. This is what being just and tolerant entails.

Antisemitism and other kinds of racism (eg. prejudice against blacks) are perversions arising from various ideologies and superstitions. When we examine anti-Semitism and other forms of racism, we see clearly that they promote ideas and a model of society that is totally contrary to the moral teachings of the Qur'an. At the root of anti-Semitism for instance lie hatred, violence, and lack of compassion. An anti-Semite may be so cruel as to support the murder of Jewish people, men, women, children and the aged, and condone their torture. However, the moral teaching of the Qur'an enjoins love, compassion and mercy for all people. It also commands Muslims to show justice and be forgiving even to their enemies. As stated in the verse: **"...if someone kills another person—unless it is in retaliation for someone else or for causing corruption in the earth—it is as if he had murdered all mankind..."** (Qur'an,

5:32) It is a very serious crime to slay even a single innocent person.

On the other hand, anti-Semites and other racists baulk at living together in peace with people of different races or creeds. (eg. German racists (Nazis) and Jewish racists (Zionists) were opposed to Germans and Jews living together. Both sides rejected it, citing concern for the degeneration of their respective races.) However, in the Qur'an, there is not the slightest distinction between races; the Qur'an advises that people of different faiths live together in the same society in peace and happiness.

The Qur'an even discriminates between those who do not believe in God and religion and those who are actively hostile to it. God commands Muslims to make their position clear to those who are hostile, while He orders them to treat with justice to those who do not show such hostility:

God does not forbid you from being good to those who have not fought you over religion or driven you from your homes, or from being just towards them. God loves those who are just. God merely forbids you from taking as friends those who have fought you over religion and driven you from your homes and who supported your expulsion. Any who take them as friends are wrongdoers. (Qur'an, 60:8-9)

In the Qur'an, we are commanded not to make judgements about people just because they belong to a particular race, nation or religion. In every community, there are good people as well as wicked people. The Qur'an draws attention to this differentiation. For instance, right after

mentioning the rebellious nature—against God and His religion—of some People of the Book, there is reference to an exception and, said:

[However] They are not all alike. Among the People of the Book there is an upright community who recite the revelation of God during the night and fall prostrate before Him. They believe in God and the Last Day, enjoin what is right and forbid what is evil, and vie with one another in good works. They are of the righteous and whatever good they do, its reward will not be denied them. God knows those who fear [Him]. (Qur'an 3:113-115)

In conclusion, a person who thinks in the light of the verses of the Qur'an and fears God can in no way feel hostility towards Jews because of their religion or creed. The moral teachings of the Qur'an exclude all racism. For this reason, a Muslim who follows the Qur'an does not practise racism and does not despise people because they belong to a certain race. It is commanded in the Qur'an that, so long as they show no hostility to Islam or Muslims, a tolerant and friendly attitude must be maintained toward other religions. For this reason, a Muslim who follows the Qur'an should assume a compassionate and friendly manner towards people of different religions, and especially towards the People of the Book.

A Muslim's view of Judaism and Holocaust must be based on these basic criteria. Jews may be subjected to criticism because they have a racist attitude, shed blood in the name of Zionism and subject other people to cruelty in

compliance with the commands of the distorted Torah. A Muslim wishes to see an end to anti-Semitic racist movements and ideologies such as Zionism that practise racism in the name of the Jews, and a peaceable world order established, in which every race and belief can live in peace and justice.

Monasteries, Churches and Synagogues must be Respected

A Muslim must respect and protect the holy places where the People of the Book worship God, and protect them. For Muslims, these places are precious because in these places, people, whether Jews or Christians, remember God. In the Qur'an, the places of worship of the People of the Book, ie. monasteries, churches and synagogues, are mentioned as places of worship protected by God.

...if God had not driven some people back by means of others, monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, where God's name is mentioned much, would have been pulled down and destroyed. God will certainly help those who help Him—God is All-Strong, Almighty. (Qur'an, 22:40)

As a manifestation of his loyalty to God's commands, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was most careful not to destroy the holy places of the People of the Book. Such destruction means, in the first place, opposing God's commands. This aside, it means preventing people who have faith in God worshipping Him. Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) promised the Christians, who were the other party to a peace

agreement he made, that their churches would not be destroyed and that they would never be harmed. The tax (jizya) agreements he made with Christians also guaranteed the safety of churches.

The first agreement made after the death of the Prophet (pbuh) that guaranteed the protection of the temples was a tax agreement Khalid bin al-Waleed signed with the leader of the city of Anat. Ibn Ishaq stated that those agreements made by Khalid bin al-Waleed were also approved by Abu Bakr and the three caliphs following him.¹⁶ This aside, Abu Bakr offered the same guarantees that had been offered to the people of Najran by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

The Islamic societies that abided by Islamic morality after the death of the Prophet (pbuh) also paid special attention to this issue. Muslim leaders who adhered to the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* (the sayings and doings of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)) respected the places of worship of non-Muslims in conquered countries and showed great tolerance to the clergy. Christians who lived under Muslim rule for centuries never rebelled for religious reasons. This, there is no doubt, is the result of the just and tolerant attitudes of Muslim leaders in compliance with Qur'anic rules.

PEACE IN SOCIETIES WHERE TRUE JUSTICE PREVAILS



In the previous sections, we mentioned the type of justice referred to in the Qur'an, the attitude of Muslims towards the People of the Book and the tolerant and just administration of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Looking at history, we see that the true justice established during the time of the prophets continued to exist under the rule of leaders who exercised justice. After the period of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), too, just administrators who strictly adhered to the teachings of the Qur'an and followed in the footsteps of the messengers managed to establish societies marked by peace. The true justice described in the Qur'an, righteousness and honesty also prevailed in the time of these administrators, making their reigns an example to follow for their successors.

After embracing Islam, Turkish people, too, made up societies that are documented as having had just, tolerant and honest administrations. As we shall see, this fact is confirmed by many Western historians. Furthermore, this fact was also sincerely expressed by researchers who were

members of communities that lived under Turkish rule for centuries. The Great Seljuk and Ottoman empires, the two great Turkish examples of their kind, spring to mind in this context. Numerous peoples who lived under their rule enjoyed the maintenance of social justice and lived in peace.

Khans of the Great Seljuk Empire who Administered Justice

With the conversion of the Turks to Islam, khans (a title given to the supreme rulers of Turkish tribes and Ottoman sultans) and sultans ruled in the light of the Islamic teachings. The spread of Islam witnessed praiseworthy accomplishments, great conquests and many other important contributions during the reign of these leaders, thanks to the guidance of justice described in the Qur'an. In his book, *The Spread of Islam in the World*, Sir Thomas Arnold, a British researcher, explains the willingness of Christians to come under Seljuk rule in these terms:

This same sense of security of religious life under Muslim rule led many of the Christians of Asia Minor, also, about the same time, to welcome the advent of the Saljuq Turks as their deliverers... In the reign of Michael VIII (1261-1282), the Turks were often invited to take possession of the smaller towns in the interior of Asia Minor by the inhabitants, that they might escape from the tyranny of the empire; and both rich and poor often emigrated into Turkish dominions.¹⁷

Malik Shah, the ruler of the Islamic Seljuk Empire during its brightest age, was very careful to apply the judgements of the Qur'an. He approached the people in the conquered

lands with great tolerance and compassion, and was thus remembered by them with respect. The Armenian historian Mateos of Urfa describes the Great Seljuk Empire as follows:

*The reign of Malik Shah was blessed by God. His sovereignty extended to the remotest countries and gave peace to Armenians. His heart was full of compassion for Christians. He treated the people of the lands he passed through like a father. Many towns and provinces came under his control of their own free will; all Roman and Armenian towns recognised his laws.*¹⁸

All objective historians refer to the justice and tolerance of Malik Shah in their works. His tolerance also kindled feelings of love towards him in the hearts of the People of the Book. For this reason, unprecedented in history, many cities came under Malik Shah's rule of their own free will. Sir Thomas Arnold also mentions Odo de Diogilo, a monk of St. Denis, who participated in the Second Crusade as the private chaplain of Louis VII and refers in his memoirs to the justice administered by Muslims, regardless of the religious affiliation of the subjects. Based on the graphic account of Odo de Diogilo, Sir Thomas Arnold writes:

The situation of the survivors would have been utterly hopeless, had not the sight of their misery melted the hearts of the Muhammadans to pity. They tended the sick and relieved the poor and starving with open-handed liberality. Some even bought up the French money which the Greeks had got out of the pilgrims by force or cunning, and lavishly distributed it among the needy. So great was the contrast between the kind treatment the pilgrims received from the unbelievers and the cruelty of their fellow-Christians, the Greeks, who imposed forced labour upon them, beat them, and

robbed them of what little they had left, that many of them voluntarily embraced the faith of their deliverers.¹⁹

Odo de Diogilo, narrating the events experienced during the Second Crusade, relates the efficacy of the tolerant, compassionate and just attitudes of Muslims:

Avoiding their co-religionists who had been so cruel to them, they went in safety among the infidels who had compassion upon them, and, as we heard, more than three thousand joined themselves to the Turks when they retired... .. though it is certain that contented with the services they performed, they compelled no one among them to renounce his religion.²⁰

These statements by historians reveal that the morality of the Qur'an commands the establishment of justice in warfare and other difficult times. This superior morality displayed by the Muslim Turks—at a time when the world was ruled by tyrants—is an indication of their commitment to the Qur'an and their superior character. For this reason, no matter how prejudicial a nation or a community may be towards Islam, their hearts will soften when they witness this good morality of Muslims, just like in the case of Crusaders.

The Ottoman Empire Brought Justice to the Conquered Lands

In societies in which people complied with the commands of the Qur'an, social life was marked by peace and tranquillity, which is a phenomenon that is also confirmed by the historical facts. One of these just administrations was the Ottoman Empire, which was

originally a small state that spread rapidly, superseding the Byzantine Empire and which eventually came over a vast swath of land including southwest Asia, northeast Africa, and southeast Europe. Today, we still come across traces of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans, the Middle East and North Africa. Everywhere in the Ottoman Empire was ruled by Muslim administrators who displayed the noble traits of people who adhered to Islamic tenets. One can understand the influence of the Ottomans from the quotation below, taken from the ten-volume work, *Histoire de la Turquie*, (1854) by Lamartine:

Visit Izmir, Istanbul, Syria or Lebanon. Go to monasteries, holy places, and educational institutions there. Look at the places where religious education is provided and ask people "Was there anything wrong with the attitude of the Ottomans to you, or the protection they provided?" All of them will tell you about "the impartial treatment of the Ottomans and the Sultan"... Indeed, in the administration of these religious places, the Ottoman sultans acted with a profound sense of objectivity, respect and peace...²¹

Starting from the time of Osman Ghazi (a title given to a victorious Muslim military leader), the founder of the Ottoman Empire, Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror, and other emperors became role models for all humanity to follow with their elevated manner and the justice they displayed in their administrations. Under their authority, people of different religions and creeds co-existed in peace. Furthermore, there existed some communities which did not resist at all and of their own free will submitted to the rule of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror. This alone bespeaks the great satisfaction

people derived from his fair treatment.

As is the case with all Islamic states, the Ottoman sultans treated the non-Muslims in the conquered lands with the utmost justice.²² That is because according to the Qur'an, the people of the conquered lands were God's trusts to the sultans. The protection of these people and keeping them safe from the cruelty of others were the responsibilities of administrators who ruled with justice. That is why, while European kingdoms subjected native peoples to genocide and cruelty, and exploited all the natural resources in the countries they occupied, the Ottoman sultans made it their main goal to bring welfare to the conquered lands. They never resorted to coercion to convert the natives. On the contrary, they provided them all the means to worship in peace.²³

Muslim Turks never intervened in the language, religion and many of the social and administrative structures of the people living under their rule. In brief, the cultures of these people were kept intact. That is why people whose religions, languages and cultures were completely different could live together in peace and harmony under one roof. Regarding this subject, historian André Miquel states the following:

*The Christian communities lived under a well administered state that they did not have during the Byzantine and Latin periods. They were never subjected to systematic persecution. On the contrary, the empire and especially Istanbul had become a refuge for Spanish Jews who were tortured. People were never Islamized by force; the movements of Islamization took place as a result of social processes.*²⁴

Turkish lands, which were then ruled in compliance with Islamic justice, provided great comfort for people of all religions. Non-Muslims living in Ottoman territories in Anatolia and Europe experienced no interruption in their social and religious lives.²⁵ Thanks to the strict adherence of Ottoman sultans to the Qur'an, no distinction was made between people because of their race, language and ethnic origins, and people of different descent enjoyed social justice. In his book, *The Ottoman History*, historian İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı stresses that non-Muslim people considered the strong tolerance of the Turks as a salvation:

*The respect of the Turks for the religious feelings of non-Muslim communities was the main cause why these people considered the Ottoman administration as a saviour.*²⁶

European historian Richard Peters expresses how Muslim Turks exercised exemplary justice in the countries they conquered:

*For ages, Turks ruled many nations but never attempted to assimilate them. They granted them their freedom and allowed them to live by their religious principles and culture.*²⁷

All these examples evinced the Muslim Turks' unwillingness to exploit conquered lands. They respected the rights of all peoples under their rule. Both Seljuks and Ottomans took it upon themselves to protect every individual living within their territories. Thus it was that people of different nations and religions lived in peace without coming into conflict with one another. If the Ottoman leaders had not adopted a just attitude towards these people, they would certainly have failed to found such

well-established empires and keep them intact for so long. However, we see that the elevated values and traits Islam endowed these administrators with helped them attain a high level of culture and civilisation.

Just Administration During the First Periods of the Ottoman Empire

Right from the initial years of its development, the founders of the Ottoman Empire adopted the principle of administering justice. They administered the various communities and disbelievers under their rule with great fairness and never resorted to coercion to make them convert to Islam. The establishment of peace was always their main priority.

Osman Ghazi, the founder of the Ottoman Empire, established strong friendships with the non-Muslims living around his territory. These good relations ensured mutual trust. For example, before Osman Ghazi took his people to the high plateau in springtime, he entrusted his goods to the care of non-Muslims in Bilecik, and months later returned with gifts such as cheese, butter and carpets for them.²⁸ The bazaar in Ilıca-Eskisehir, a province within the territories held by Osman Ghazi, attracted non-Muslims from the neighbouring regions because of its security.²⁹ Warm social relations with non-Muslims permeated Osman Ghazi's time. One event the historian Joseph von Hammer relates in his book, *Ottoman History*, exalts Osman Ghazi's just administration for all people, no matter to which religion they belonged:

One day, non-Muslims from Bilecik brought a load of glasses to the bazaar. One Muslim bought glasses but did not pay for them. When the salesman complained, Osman Ghazi called the Muslim who had failed to pay, took the money from him and immediately gave it to the non-Muslim. Following that, Osman Ghazi used his town criers to order his people not to act unjustly towards the non-Muslims of Bilecik. Osman Ghazi's administration proved to be so fair that even non-Muslim women could come and shop in the bazaar in safety. Under the administration of Osman Ghazi, the non-Muslim community felt safe. When Osman Ghazi was asked the reason for his extreme sensitivity in doing justice to the non-Muslims of Bilecik, he answered: "They are our neighbours. When we first came to this land, they welcomed us. What becomes of us now is to respect them."³⁰

This virtuous conduct of Osman Ghazi is simply a manifestation of God's command:

Worship God and do not associate anything with Him. Be good to your parents and relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to neighbours who are related to you and neighbours who are not related to you, and to companions and travellers and your slaves. God does not love anyone vain or boastful. (Qur'an, 4:36)

This behaviour in compliance with the Qur'anic injunctions caused many people to be reconciled to Islam. After the conquests of Yarhisar, İnegöl, Bilecik, Yenişehir (towns in Anatolia) and their surroundings, Osman Ghazi treated the native non-Muslims with justice and tolerance, and did not confiscate their lands. Indeed, Ottoman rule promoted public welfare and made these lands better places to live in a very short time. Furthermore, these safe lands

even attracted other non-Muslim communities, which came and settled in the Ottoman lands.³¹ If Osman Ghazi had not ensured the establishment of that just, tolerant and secure environment which Islam demands, non-Muslims whose lands were conquered by Muslims might well have adopted a hostile manner. However, being a person of faith, who strictly observed God's commands, he administered justice. Osman Ghazi also attended wedding ceremonies of non-Muslims and gave them gifts, which are acts that attest to his tolerance of and respect for non-Muslims.³²

In his book, *The Ottoman History*, Joseph von Hammer relates another example of Osman Ghazi's justice:

*On a Friday, a Muslim, who was a subject of the Germiyan Turk ruler Alishir quarrelled with a Christian who was under the command of a Roman commander of Bilecik. Osman judged between them and found the Christian innocent. Then, throughout the country, everyone started to talk about Osman's justice and honesty.*³³

It is further related that just before his death, Osman Ghazi instructed his son Orhan to protect all his subjects equitably and to please those who obeyed him.³⁴ The reputation of Osman's justice extended even to remote lands. For this reason, Orhan Ghazi did not have to fight to capture Bursa (a town in Anatolia). The commander of the town surrendered the castle to Orhan Ghazi of his own free will. Then Orhan Ghazi asked Saroz, the commander in Bursa, why he had surrendered the castle. Saroz replied that those who obeyed Orhan Ghazi enjoyed peace, and that was what his people also longed for.³⁵ The answer of the Romans in

Bursa to the same question also reflects the very same sincere feelings:

*We see that your state is growing stronger each day, surpassing ours; we see that those peasants who came under your father's rule are happy and no longer remember us. This being the case, we also desired to attain such well-being.*³⁶

A letter written by the Archbishop of Thessaloniki, Gregory Palamas, who was captured by the Ottomans in 1355, explicitly reveals the tolerance displayed by Orhan Ghazi and his officials towards Christians. In his letter, Palamas stated that Christians enjoyed complete freedom in Ottoman lands, that Solomon Pasha, the son of Orhan Ghazi, asked him questions about Christianity and that Sultan Orhan himself had a discussion with him, as well as Muslim theologians and scholars.³⁷

Orhan Ghazi's tolerant and just administration was not limited to Christian communities. Jewish communities also benefited from the justice stemming from the noble spirit of Islam that manifested itself in Orhan Ghazi's administration. Having lost everything they held dear under the rule of other states, Jews in Edirne and other Thrace towns received the Ottoman conquest with pleasure.³⁸

The Ottoman Emperor's favourable attitude to Jews also continued during the time of Murad I. Byzantine historian Chalcondylas described Sultan Murad's just and tolerant administration as follows:

Regardless of their religion, the people who obeyed and served him received generous and kind treatment. He was tough on those who were hostile. None of his enemies succeeded in escaping him. He

*earned the trust of everyone, be he a friend or an enemy, because he kept his promises, even if they later turned out to be against his interests.*³⁹

Gibbon, the British historian, described Sultan Murad's tolerance towards Christians by writing that he treated Orthodox people much better than Catholics treated Orthodox people.⁴⁰

All these examples reveal why the Ottoman Empire gained great power so rapidly during its early years. The just attitudes of the rulers had very positive effects on people of different religions, and the Ottomans extended their borders to far-off continents. The most important reason why this expansion continued during the reigns of other sultans is this same tolerant and just attitude. The tolerant and just environment established in the time of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror is an established fact accepted by all historians.

True Justice was Established at the Time of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror

The conquests during the time of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror extended the borders of the empire to three continents, and the conquest of Istanbul marked the beginning of a new age. This conquest was a milestone in European history as well as Ottoman. Sultan Mehmed also practiced the justice and tolerance of Islam on the people of the lands he conquered.

Sultan Mehmed's tolerance towards the People of the Book is documented by the agreements he made. His tolerant administration stemmed from Islamic tenets and included

everyone: Jews, Armenians and Syrian Orthodox communities.⁴¹ That is why during his reign, many nations were pleased to be under his rule. A statement by the Grand Duke Lucas Notaras, the Byzantine commander, "I would rather see the Muslim turban in the midst of the city than the Latin mitre"⁴² confirms that fact.

The conquest of Istanbul by Sultan Mehmed was initially a cause of great fear among non-Muslims. The majority of these feared they would suffer discrimination, oppression and attacks, and so fled from Istanbul or congregated in St. Sophia Church. However, Sultan Mehmed, who treated them with justice and tolerance, relieved them of all their fears and allowed them to return to their homes and go on with their daily lives.⁴³ He allowed non-Muslims to live according to their own religions and their own rules, and furthermore, brought in conditions under which people of different creeds could carry out their religious obligations without hindrance.⁴⁴ In the palace, Muslim and Christian scholars lived side by side and discussed issues in an atmosphere of tolerance.

Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror tried to learn about Christianity from a Christian,⁴⁵ and granted the Patriarch an imperial edict entitling the Christian community to administer their own law in the conduct of their daily lives. Sultan Mehmed gave the Patriarchate enormous freedom, and thus the Patriarchate received autonomy under Turkish rule.⁴⁶ The historian Hammer published a copy of the imperial edict (*modus vivendi*) compiled from Western and Eastern sources. Hammer quotes the following in the acquittal sent to the Patriarch by the Sultan:

*No one will oppress the patriarch: no one will ever bother him, regardless of his identity. The patriarch and the great priests in his service will be excused from all forms of services for an indefinite period of time.*⁴⁷

Right after the conquest, Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror set about dealing with the judicial rights of minorities, appointed Gennadius as the Greek-Orthodox Patriarch and signed an agreement with them. Another agreement he made with the People of the Book living in Galata (a district of Istanbul), confirmed that the churches in Galata would not be confiscated or turned into mosques, and that the People of the Book would not be forced to convert to Islam.⁴⁸ Another agreement made in the same period entitled the spiritual leaders known as "metropolitans" to carry out their services as usual.⁴⁹

Apart from the rights of Christians, Sultan Mehmed also paid attention to the rights of Jews. They were also granted the right to have their own synagogues and rabbis and to carry out their religious services freely. Sultan Mehmed invited Rabbi Moses Kapsali to the palace, the first rabbi of the Ottoman period, complimented him and granted him an imperial edict to judge cases involving Jews.⁵⁰

These developments that occurred following the conquest of Istanbul by Sultan Mehmed also characterised the reigns of the succeeding Ottoman sultans. The Ottoman army extended its borders as far as Vienna. They conquered the Balkans entirely. Serbia, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Wallachia and Moldavia passed to the Ottoman Empire and Hungary was taken under its protection. Ottoman influence was also felt in lands bordering on the sea. The Black Sea

became a Turkish lake. Many Aegean islands such as the Mora Peninsula, Rhodes, Crete and Chios, the Caucasus, and places such as Baghdad, Tabriz, the Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, Palestine, Jerusalem, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, eastern Anatolia, the Spice Road, Poland and many other regions were included within the territories of the Ottoman Empire. People of different religions lived in these conquered lands in peace. Nobody was oppressed because of his religion, language or race.

A model in which such justice and tolerance prevails is what is most desired in our world today. The only way to attain such a society is to live by the values of the Qur'an. As the examples above confirm, the leaders who adopted the Qur'anic injunctions and the societies they led attained great prosperity. Since the values of the Qur'an were adopted by everyone, from all walks of society, justice, compassion, tolerance, love, mercy and honesty pervaded the whole of society and brought peace and harmony to social life.

There is no reason why such a society cannot be established again. The only prerequisite for such a society is a sincere intention to live by the values of the Qur'an and to make serious efforts to spread these values to the whole of society.

CONCLUSION



Throughout this book, we dealt with what kind of an understanding a person of faith should have regarding justice and the sort of society that will be established once such justice and tolerance prevail. There is, however, another point that deserves mention here: Peoples' efforts to maintain justice in society also reflect their meticulousness in living by God's religion and observing His commands.

For this reason, Muslims who adhere to the Qur'an must internalise this real understanding of justice. A Muslim is responsible for ruling with justice and showing tolerance, in the same way that he displays the greatest care in observing God's commands. Adopting a contrary attitude would mean believing in some parts of the Qur'an and rejecting others. In the Qur'an, God draws attention to this situation that people might fall into:

...Do you, then, believe in one part of the Book and reject the other? What repayment will there be for any of you who do that except disgrace in the world? And on the Day of Rising, they will be returned to the harshest of punishments. God is not unaware of what you do. (Qur'an, 2:85)

A Muslim knows only too well how severe this punishment might be. God is the al-Adl, the Just, and He renders His servants perfect justice. He will show His justice to His servants in the hereafter in the same way that He does in this world. People will give account of every deed, whether important or insignificant, they have done all through their lives, every remark they have uttered and every thought that occurred in their minds, and they will be repaid for them. This will take the form of either the endless blessings of Paradise or painful punishment:

Each and every one of you will return to Him. God's promise is true. He brings creation out of nothing and then regenerates it so that he can repay with justice those who had faith and did right actions. Those who were disbelievers will have a drink of scalding water and a painful punishment because of their disbelief. (Qur'an, 10:4)

For this reason, a Muslim avoids all kinds of behaviour which will not be pleasing to God. The social life marked by peace and tolerance during the administration of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the caliphs succeeding him and other Muslim administrators, depended on commitment to the Qur'an.

As exemplified in this book, Muslims have an honourable past with the justice, mercy, tolerance, compassion, conscience they displayed and the noble values they possessed. There is therefore nothing to prevent the Muslims of today drawing lessons from past experiences and re-establishing justice on earth, and putting an end to cruelty. The only thing that remains to be done is to act in unity and to strive seriously to attain the real justice promised in the Qur'an.

THE EVOLUTION MISCONCEPTION



Every detail in this universe points to a superior creation. By contrast, materialism, which seeks to deny the fact of creation in the universe, is nothing but an unscientific fallacy.

Once materialism is invalidated, all other theories based on this philosophy are rendered baseless. Foremost of them is Darwinism, that is, the theory of evolution. This theory, which argues that life originated from inanimate matter through coincidences, has been demolished with the recognition that the universe was created by God. American astrophysicist Hugh Ross explains this as follows:

Atheism, Darwinism, and virtually all the "isms" emanating from the eighteenth to the twentieth century philosophies are built upon the assumption, the incorrect assumption, that the universe is infinite. The singularity has brought us face to face with the cause – or causer – beyond/behind/before the universe and all that it contains, including life itself.⁵¹

It is God Who created the universe and Who designed it down to its smallest detail. Therefore, it is impossible for the

theory of evolution, which holds that living beings are not created by God, but are products of coincidences, to be true.

Unsurprisingly, when we look at the theory of evolution, we see that this theory is denounced by scientific findings. The design in life is extremely complex and striking. In the inanimate world, for instance, we can explore how sensitive are the balances which atoms rest upon, and further, in the animate world, we can observe in what complex designs these atoms were brought together, and how extraordinary are the mechanisms and structures such as proteins, enzymes, and cells, which are manufactured with them.

This extraordinary design in life invalidated Darwinism at the end of the 20th century.

We have dealt with this subject in great detail in some of our other studies, and shall continue to do so. However, we think that, considering its importance, it will be helpful to make a short summary here as well.

The Scientific Collapse of Darwinism

Although a doctrine going back as far as ancient Greece, the theory of evolution was advanced extensively in the 19th century. The most important development that made the theory the top topic of the world of science was the book by Charles Darwin titled *The Origin of Species* published in 1859. In this book, Darwin denied that different living species on the earth were created separately by God. According to Darwin, all living beings had a common ancestor and they diversified over time through small changes.

Darwin's theory was not based on any concrete scientific finding; as he also accepted, it was just an "assumption."

Moreover, as Darwin confessed in the long chapter of his book titled "Difficulties of the Theory," the theory was failing in the face of many critical questions.

Darwin invested all his hopes in new scientific discoveries, which he expected to solve the "Difficulties of the Theory." However, contrary to his expectations, scientific findings expanded the dimensions of these difficulties.

The defeat of Darwinism against science can be reviewed under three basic topics:

- 1) The theory can by no means explain how life originated on the earth.

- 2) There is no scientific finding showing that the "evolutionary mechanisms" proposed by the theory have any power to evolve at all.

- 3) The fossil record proves completely the contrary of the suggestions of the theory of evolution.

In this section, we will examine these three basic points in general outlines:

The First Insurmountable Step: The Origin of Life

The theory of evolution posits that all living species evolved from a single living cell that emerged on the primitive earth 3.8 billion years ago. How a single cell could generate millions of complex living species and, if such an evolution really occurred, why traces of it cannot be observed in the fossil record are some of the questions the theory cannot answer. However, first and foremost, of the first step of the alleged evolutionary process it has to be inquired: How did this "first cell" originate?

Since the theory of evolution denies creation and does not accept any kind of supernatural intervention, it maintains that the "first cell" originated coincidentally within the laws of nature, without any design, plan, or arrangement. According to the theory, inanimate matter must have produced a living cell as a result of coincidences. This, however, is a claim inconsistent with even the most unassailable rules of biology.

"Life Comes from Life"

In his book, Darwin never referred to the origin of life. The primitive understanding of science in his time rested on the assumption that living beings had a very simple structure. Since medieval times, spontaneous generation, the theory asserting that non-living materials came together to form living organisms, had been widely accepted. It was commonly believed that insects came into being from food leftovers, and mice from wheat. Interesting experiments were conducted to prove this theory. Some wheat was placed on a dirty piece of cloth, and it was believed that mice would originate from it after a while.

Similarly, worms developing in meat was assumed to be evidence of spontaneous generation. However, only some time later was it understood that worms did not appear on meat spontaneously, but were carried there by flies in the form of larvae, invisible to the naked eye.

Even in the period when Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*, the belief that bacteria could come into existence from non-living matter was widely accepted in the world of science.

However, five years after the publication of Darwin's book, Louis Pasteur announced his results after long studies and experiments, which disproved spontaneous generation, a cornerstone of Darwin's theory. In his triumphal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1864, Pasteur said, *"Never will the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow struck by this simple experiment."*⁵²

Advocates of the theory of evolution resisted the findings of Pasteur for a long time. However, as the development of science unraveled the complex structure of the cell of a living being, the idea that life could come into being coincidentally faced an even greater impasse.

Inconclusive Efforts in the Twentieth Century

The first evolutionist who took up the subject of the origin of life in the twentieth century was the renowned Russian biologist Alexander Oparin. With various theses he advanced in the 1930's, he tried to prove that the cell of a living being could originate by coincidence. These studies, however, were doomed to failure, and Oparin had to make the following confession: "Unfortunately, however, the problem of the origin of the cell is perhaps the most obscure point in the whole study of the evolution of organisms."⁵³

Evolutionist followers of Oparin tried to carry out experiments to solve the problem of the origin of life. The best known of these experiments was carried out by American chemist Stanley Miller in 1953. Combining the gases he alleged to have existed in the primordial earth's atmosphere in an experiment set-up, and adding energy to the mixture, Miller synthesized several organic molecules

(amino acids) present in the structure of proteins.

Barely a few years had passed before it was revealed that this experiment, which was then presented as an important step in the name of evolution, was invalid, the atmosphere used in the experiment having been very different from real earth conditions.⁵⁴

After a long silence, Miller confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.⁵⁵

All the evolutionist efforts put forth throughout the twentieth century to explain the origin of life ended with failure. The geochemist Jeffrey Bada from San Diego Scripps Institute accepts this fact in an article published in *Earth Magazine* in 1998:

*Today as we leave the twentieth century, we still face the biggest unsolved problem that we had when we entered the twentieth century: How did life originate on Earth?*⁵⁶

The Complex Structure of Life

The primary reason why the theory of evolution ended up in such a big impasse about the origin of life is that even the living organisms deemed the simplest have incredibly complex structures. The cell of a living being is more complex than all of the technological products produced by man. Today, even in the most developed laboratories of the world, a living cell cannot be produced by bringing inorganic materials together.

The conditions required for the formation of a cell are too great in quantity to be explained away by coincidences. The probability of proteins, the building blocks of cell, being synthesized coincidentally, is 1 in 10^{950} for an average

protein made up of 500 amino acids. In mathematics, a probability smaller than 1 over 10^{50} is practically considered to be impossible.

The DNA molecule, which is located in the nucleus of the cell and which stores genetic information, is an incredible databank. It is calculated that if the information coded in DNA were written down, this would make a giant library consisting of 900 volumes of encyclopaedias of 500 pages each.

A very interesting dilemma emerges at this point: the DNA can only replicate with the help of some specialized proteins (enzymes). However, the synthesis of these enzymes can only be realized by the information coded in DNA. As they both depend on each other, they have to exist at the same time for replication. This brings the scenario that life originated by itself to a deadlock. Prof. Leslie Orgel, an evolutionist of repute from the University of San Diego, California, confesses this fact in the September 1994 issue of the *Scientific American* magazine:

*It is extremely improbable that proteins and nucleic acids, both of which are structurally complex, arose spontaneously in the same place at the same time. Yet it also seems impossible to have one without the other. And so, at first glance, one might have to conclude that life could never, in fact, have originated by chemical means.*⁵⁷

No doubt, if it is impossible for life to have originated from natural causes, then it has to be accepted that life was "created" in a supernatural way. This fact explicitly invalidates the theory of evolution, whose main purpose is to deny creation.

Imaginary Mechanisms of Evolution

The second important point that negates Darwin's theory is that both concepts put forward by the theory as "evolutionary mechanisms" were understood to have, in reality, no evolutionary power.

Darwin based his evolution allegation entirely on the mechanism of "natural selection". The importance he placed on this mechanism was evident in the name of his book: *The Origin of Species, By Means Of Natural Selection...*

Natural selection holds that those living things that are stronger and more suited to the natural conditions of their habitats will survive in the struggle for life. For example, in a deer herd under the threat of attack by wild animals, those that can run faster will survive. Therefore, the deer herd will be comprised of faster and stronger individuals. However, unquestionably, this mechanism will not cause deer to evolve and transform themselves into another living species, for instance, horses.

Therefore, the mechanism of natural selection has no evolutionary power. Darwin was also aware of this fact and had to state this in his book *The Origin of Species*:

*Natural selection can do nothing until favourable individual differences or variations occur.*⁵⁸

Lamarck's Impact

So, how could these "favourable variations" occur? Darwin tried to answer this question from the standpoint of the primitive understanding of science in his age. According to the French biologist Lamarck, who lived before Darwin,

living creatures passed on the traits they acquired during their lifetime to the next generation and these traits, accumulating from one generation to another, caused new species to be formed. For instance, according to Lamarck, giraffes evolved from antelopes; as they struggled to eat the leaves of high trees, their necks were extended from generation to generation.

Darwin also gave similar examples, and in his book *The Origin of Species*, for instance, said that some bears going into water to find food transformed themselves into whales over time.⁵⁹

However, the laws of inheritance discovered by Mendel and verified by the science of genetics that flourished in the 20th century, utterly demolished the legend that acquired traits were passed on to subsequent generations. Thus, natural selection fell out of favour as an evolutionary mechanism.

Neo-Darwinism and Mutations

In order to find a solution, Darwinists advanced the "Modern Synthetic Theory", or as it is more commonly known, Neo-Darwinism, at the end of the 1930's. Neo-Darwinism added mutations, which are distortions formed in the genes of living beings because of external factors such as radiation or replication errors, as the "cause of favourable variations" in addition to natural mutation.

Today, the model that stands for evolution in the world is Neo-Darwinism. The theory maintains that millions of living beings present on the earth formed as a result of a process

whereby numerous complex organs of these organisms such as the ears, eyes, lungs, and wings, underwent "mutations," that is, genetic disorders. Yet, there is an outright scientific fact that totally undermines this theory: Mutations do not cause living beings to develop; on the contrary, they always cause harm to them.

The reason for this is very simple: the DNA has a very complex structure and random effects can only cause harm to it. American geneticist B.G. Ranganathan explains this as follows:

*First, genuine mutations are very rare in nature. Secondly, most mutations are harmful since they are random, rather than orderly changes in the structure of genes; any random change in a highly ordered system will be for the worse, not for the better. For example, if an earthquake were to shake a highly ordered structure such as a building, there would be a random change in the framework of the building which, in all probability, would not be an improvement.*⁶⁰

Not surprisingly, no mutation example, which is useful, that is, which is observed to develop the genetic code, has been observed so far. All mutations have proved to be harmful. It was understood that mutation, which is presented as an "evolutionary mechanism," is actually a genetic occurrence that harms living beings, and leaves them disabled. (The most common effect of mutation on human beings is cancer). No doubt, a destructive mechanism cannot be an "evolutionary mechanism." Natural selection, on the other hand, "can do nothing by itself" as Darwin also accepted. This fact shows us that there is no "evolutionary mechanism" in nature. Since no evolutionary mechanism

exists, neither could any imaginary process called evolution have taken place.

The Fossil Record: No Sign of Intermediate Forms

The clearest evidence that the scenario suggested by the theory of evolution did not take place is the fossil record.

According to the theory of evolution, every living species has sprung from a predecessor. A previously existing species turned into something else in time and all species have come into being in this way. According to the theory, this transformation proceeds gradually over millions of years.

Had this been the case, then numerous intermediary species should have existed and lived within this long transformation period.

For instance, some half-fish/half-reptiles should have lived in the past which had acquired some reptilian traits in addition to the fish traits they already had. Or there should have existed some reptile-birds, which acquired some bird traits in addition to the reptilian traits they already had. Since these would be in a transitional phase, they should be disabled, defective, crippled living beings. Evolutionists refer to these imaginary creatures, which they believe to have lived in the past, as "transitional forms."

If such animals had really existed, there should be millions and even billions of them in number and variety. More importantly, the remains of these strange creatures should be present in the fossil record. In *The Origin of Species*, Darwin explained:

If my theory be true, numberless intermediate varieties,

*linking most closely all of the species of the same group together must assuredly have existed... Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains.*⁶¹

Darwin's Hopes Shattered

However, although evolutionists have been making strenuous efforts to find fossils since the middle of the 19th century all over the world, no transitional forms have yet been uncovered. All the fossils unearthed in excavations showed that, contrary to the expectations of evolutionists, life appeared on earth all of a sudden and fully-formed.

A famous British paleontologist, Derek V. Ager, admits this fact, even though he is an evolutionist:

*The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail, whether at the level of orders or of species, we find - over and over again - not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another.*⁶²

This means that in the fossil record, all living species suddenly emerge as fully formed, without any intermediate forms in between. This is just the opposite of Darwin's assumptions. Also, it is very strong evidence that living beings are created. The only explanation of a living species emerging suddenly and complete in every detail without any evolutionary ancestor can be that this species was created. This fact is admitted also by the widely known evolutionist biologist Douglas Futuyma:

Creation and evolution, between them, exhaust the possible explanations for the origin of living things. Organisms either appeared on the earth fully developed or they did not. If they

*did not, they must have developed from pre-existing species by some process of modification. If they did appear in a fully developed state, they must indeed have been created by some omnipotent intelligence.*⁶³

Fossils show that living beings emerged fully developed and in a perfect state on the earth. That means that "the origin of species" is, contrary to Darwin's supposition, not evolution but creation.

The Tale of Human Evolution

The subject most often brought up by the advocates of the theory of evolution is the subject of the origin of man. The Darwinist claim holds that the modern men of today evolved from some kind of ape-like creatures. During this alleged evolutionary process, which is supposed to have started 4-5 million years ago, it is claimed that there existed some "transitional forms" between modern man and his ancestors. According to this completely imaginary scenario, four basic "categories" are listed:

1. *Australopithecus*
2. *Homo habilis*
3. *Homo erectus*
4. *Homo sapiens*

Evolutionists call the so-called first ape-like ancestors of men "*Australopithecus*" which means "South African ape." These living beings are actually nothing but an old ape species that has become extinct. Extensive research done on various *Australopithecus* specimens by two world famous anatomists from England and the USA, namely, Lord Solly Zuckerman and Prof. Charles Oxnard, has shown that these

belonged to an ordinary ape species that became extinct and bore no resemblance to humans.⁶⁴

Evolutionists classify the next stage of human evolution as "homo," that is "man." According to the evolutionist claim, the living beings in the Homo series are more developed than Australopithecus. Evolutionists devise a fanciful evolution scheme by arranging different fossils of these creatures in a particular order. This scheme is imaginary because it has never been proved that there is an evolutionary relation between these different classes. Ernst Mayr, one of the most important proponents of the theory of evolution in the twentieth century, contends in his book *One Long Argument* that "*particularly historical [puzzles] such as the origin of life or of Homo sapiens, are extremely difficult and may even resist a final, satisfying explanation.*"⁶⁵

By outlining the link chain as "*Australopithecus > Homo habilis > Homo erectus > Homo sapiens,*" evolutionists imply that each of these species is one another's ancestor. However, recent findings of paleoanthropologists have revealed that Australopithecus, Homo habilis and Homo erectus lived at different parts of the world at the same time.⁶⁶

Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as Homo erectus have lived up until very modern times. *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis* and *Homo sapiens sapiens* (modern man) co-existed in the same region.⁶⁷

This situation apparently indicates the invalidity of the claim that they are ancestors of one another. A paleontologist from Harvard University, Stephen Jay Gould, explains this deadlock of the theory of evolution although he is an evolutionist himself:

*What has become of our ladder if there are three coexisting lineages of hominids (A. africanus, the robust australopithecines, and H. habilis), none clearly derived from another? Moreover, none of the three display any evolutionary trends during their tenure on earth.*⁶⁸

Put briefly, the scenario of human evolution, which is sought to be upheld with the help of various drawings of some "half ape, half human" creatures appearing in the media and course books, that is, frankly, by means of propaganda, is nothing but a tale with no scientific ground.

Lord Solly Zuckerman, one of the most famous and respected scientists in the U.K., who carried out research on this subject for years, and particularly studied *Australopithecus* fossils for 15 years, finally concluded, despite being an evolutionist himself, that there is, in fact, no such family tree branching out from ape-like creatures to man.

Zuckerman also made an interesting "spectrum of science." He formed a spectrum of sciences ranging from those he considered scientific to those he considered unscientific. According to Zuckerman's spectrum, the most "scientific"—that is, depending on concrete data—fields of science are chemistry and physics. After them come the biological sciences and then the social sciences. At the far end of the spectrum, which is the part considered to be most "unscientific," are "extra-sensory perception"—concepts such as telepathy and sixth sense—and finally "human evolution." Zuckerman explains his reasoning:

We then move right off the register of objective truth into those fields of presumed biological science, like extrasensory

perception or the interpretation of man's fossil history, where to the faithful [evolutionist] anything is possible - and where the ardent believer [in evolution] is sometimes able to believe several contradictory things at the same time.⁶⁹

The tale of human evolution boils down to nothing but the prejudiced interpretations of some fossils unearthed by certain people, who blindly adhere to their theory.

Technology In The Eye and The Ear

Another subject that remains unanswered by evolutionary theory is the excellent quality of perception in the eye and the ear.

Before passing on to the subject of the eye, let us briefly answer the question of "how we see". Light rays coming from an object fall oppositely on the retina of the eye. Here, these light rays are transmitted into electric signals by cells and they reach a tiny spot at the back of the brain called the centre of vision. These electric signals are perceived in this centre of the brain as an image after a series of processes. With this technical background, let us do some thinking.

The brain is insulated from light. That means that the inside of the brain is solid dark, and light does not reach the location where the brain is situated. The place called the centre of vision is a solid dark place where no light ever reaches; it may even be the darkest place you have ever known. However, you observe a luminous, bright world in this pitch darkness.

The image formed in the eye is so sharp and distinct that even the technology of the 20th century has not been able to attain it. For instance, look at the book you read, your hands

with which you hold it, then lift your head and look around you. Have you ever seen such a sharp and distinct image as this one at any other place? Even the most developed television screen produced by the greatest television producer in the world cannot provide such a sharp image for you. This is a three-dimensional, colored, and extremely sharp image. For more than 100 years, thousands of engineers have been trying to achieve this sharpness. Factories, huge premises were established, much research has been done, plans and designs have been made for this purpose. Again, look at a TV screen and the book you hold in your hands. You will see that there is a big difference in sharpness and distinction. Moreover, the TV screen shows you a two-dimensional image, whereas with your eyes, you watch a three-dimensional perspective having depth.

For many years, tens of thousands of engineers have tried to make a three-dimensional TV, and reach the vision quality of the eye. Yes, they have made a three-dimensional television system but it is not possible to watch it without putting on glasses; moreover, it is only an artificial three-dimension. The background is more blurred, the foreground appears like a paper setting. Never has it been possible to produce a sharp and distinct vision like that of the eye. In both the camera and the television, there is a loss of image quality.

Evolutionists claim that the mechanism producing this sharp and distinct image has been formed by chance. Now, if somebody told you that the television in your room was formed as a result of chance, that all its atoms just happened to come together and make up this device that produces an

image, what would you think? How can atoms do what thousands of people cannot?

If a device producing a more primitive image than the eye could not have been formed by chance, then it is very evident that the eye and the image seen by the eye could not have been formed by chance. The same situation applies to the ear. The outer ear picks up the available sounds by the auricle and directs them to the middle ear; the middle ear transmits the sound vibrations by intensifying them; the inner ear sends these vibrations to the brain by translating them into electric signals. Just as with the eye, the act of hearing finalises in the centre of hearing in the brain.

The situation in the eye is also true for the ear. That is, the brain is insulated from sound just like it is from light: it does not let any sound in. Therefore, no matter how noisy is the outside, the inside of the brain is completely silent. Nevertheless, the sharpest sounds are perceived in the brain. In your brain, which is insulated from sound, you listen to the symphonies of an orchestra, and hear all the noises in a crowded place. However, if the sound level in your brain was measured by a precise device at that moment, it would be seen that a complete silence is prevailing there.

As is the case with imagery, decades of effort have been spent in trying to generate and reproduce sound that is faithful to the original. The results of these efforts are sound recorders, high-fidelity systems, and systems for sensing sound. Despite all this technology and the thousands of engineers and experts who have been working on this endeavour, no sound has yet been obtained that has the same sharpness and clarity as the sound perceived by the ear.

Think of the highest-quality HI-FI systems produced by the biggest company in the music industry. Even in these devices, when sound is recorded some of it is lost; or when you turn on a HI-FI you always hear a hissing sound before the music starts. However, the sounds that are the products of the technology of the human body are extremely sharp and clear. A human ear never perceives a sound accompanied by a hissing sound or with atmospherics as does HI-FI; it perceives sound exactly as it is, sharp and clear. This is the way it has been since the creation of man.

So far, no visual or recording apparatus produced by man has been as sensitive and successful in perceiving sensory data as are the eye and the ear.

However, as far as seeing and hearing are concerned, a far greater fact lies beyond all this.

To Whom Does the Consciousness that Sees and Hears Within the Brain Belong?

Who is it that watches an alluring world in its brain, listens to symphonies and the twittering of birds, and smells the rose?

The stimulations coming from the eyes, ears, and nose of a human being travel to the brain as electro-chemical nervous impulses. In biology, physiology, and biochemistry books, you can find many details about how this image forms in the brain. However, you will never come across the most important fact about this subject: Who is it that perceives these electro-chemical nervous impulses as images, sounds, odours and sensory events in the brain? There is a consciousness in the brain that perceives all this without

feeling any need for eye, ear, and nose. To whom does this consciousness belong? There is no doubt that this consciousness does not belong to the nerves, the fat layer and neurons comprising the brain. This is why Darwinist-materialists, who believe that everything is comprised of matter, cannot give any answer to these questions.

For this consciousness is the spirit created by God. The spirit needs neither the eye to watch the images, nor the ear to hear the sounds. Furthermore, nor does it need the brain to think.

Everyone who reads this explicit and scientific fact should ponder on Almighty God, should fear Him and seek refuge in Him, He Who squeezes the entire universe in a pitch-dark place of a few cubic centimetres in a three-dimensional, colored, shadowy, and luminous form.

A Materialist Faith

The information we have presented so far shows us that the theory of evolution is a claim evidently at variance with scientific findings. The theory's claim on the origin of life is inconsistent with science, the evolutionary mechanisms it proposes have no evolutionary power, and fossils demonstrate that the intermediate forms required by the theory never existed. So, it certainly follows that the theory of evolution should be pushed aside as an unscientific idea. This is how many ideas such as the earth-centered universe model have been taken out of the agenda of science throughout history.

However, the theory of evolution is pressingly kept on the agenda of science. Some people even try to represent

criticisms directed against the theory as an "attack on science." Why?

The reason is that the theory of evolution is an indispensable dogmatic belief for some circles. These circles are blindly devoted to materialist philosophy and adopt Darwinism because it is the only materialist explanation that can be put forward for the workings of nature.

Interestingly enough, they also confess this fact from time to time. A well known geneticist and an outspoken evolutionist, Richard C. Lewontin from Harvard University, confesses that he is "first and foremost a materialist and then a scientist":

*It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, so we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.*⁷⁰

These are explicit statements that Darwinism is a dogma kept alive just for the sake of adherence to the materialist philosophy. This dogma maintains that there is no being save matter. Therefore, it argues that inanimate, unconscious matter created life. It insists that millions of different living species; for instance, birds, fish, giraffes, tigers, insects, trees, flowers, whales and human beings originated as a result of the interactions between matter such as the pouring rain, the lightning flash, etc., out of inanimate matter. This is a precept contrary both to reason and science. Yet Darwinists continue

to defend it just so as "not to allow a Divine Foot in the door."

Anyone who does not look at the origin of living beings with a materialist prejudice will see this evident truth: All living beings are works of a Creator, Who is All-Powerful, All-Wise and All-Knowing. This Creator is God, Who created the whole universe from non-existence, designed it in the most perfect form, and fashioned all living beings.

The Theory of Evolution is the Most Potent Spell in the World

It needs to be made clear that anyone free of prejudice and the influence of any particular ideology, who uses only his reason and logic, will clearly understand that belief in the theory of evolution, which brings to mind the superstitions of societies with no knowledge of science or civilization, is quite impossible.

As has been explained above, those who believe in the theory of evolution think that a few atoms and molecules thrown into a huge vat could produce thinking, reasoning professors, university students, scientists such as Einstein and Galileo, artists such as Humphrey Bogart, Frank Sinatra and Pavarotti, as well as antelopes, lemon trees and carnations. Moreover, the scientists and professors who believe in this nonsense are educated people. That is why it is quite justifiable to speak of the theory of evolution as "the most potent spell in history." Never before has any other belief or idea so taken away peoples' powers of reason, refused to allow them to think intelligently and logically and hidden the truth from them as if they had been blindfolded. This is an even worse and unbelievable blindness than the

Egyptians worshipping the Sun God Ra, totem worship in some parts of Africa, the people of Saba worshipping the Sun, the tribe of the Prophet Ibrahim worshipping idols they had made with their own hands or the people of the Prophet Musa worshipping the Golden Calf.

In fact, this situation is a lack of reason pointed to by God in the Qur'an. He reveals in many verses that some peoples' minds will be closed and that they will be powerless to see the truth. Some of these verses are as follows:

As for those who disbelieve, it makes no difference to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe. God has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Qur'an, 2: 6-7)

...They have hearts they do not understand with. They have eyes they do not see with. They have ears they do not hear with. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Qur'an, 7: 179)

Even if We opened up to them a door into heaven, and they spent the day ascending through it, they would only say, "Our eyesight is befuddled! Or rather we have been put under a spell!" (Qur'an, 15: 14-15)

Words cannot express just how astonishing it is that this spell should hold such a wide community in thrall, keep people from the truth, and not be broken for 150 years. It is understandable that one or a few people might believe in impossible scenarios and claims full of stupidity and

illogicality. However, "magic" is the only possible explanation for people from all over the world believing that unconscious and lifeless atoms suddenly decided to come together and form a universe that functions with a flawless system of organization, discipline, reason and consciousness, the planet Earth with all its features so perfectly suited to life, and living things full of countless complex systems.

In fact, God reveals in the Qur'an in the incident of the Prophet Musa and Pharaoh that some people who support atheistic philosophies actually influence others by magic. When Pharaoh was told about the true religion, he told the Prophet Musa to meet with his own magicians. When the Prophet Musa did so, he told them to demonstrate their abilities first. The verses continue:

He said, "You throw." And when they threw, they cast a spell on the people's eyes and caused them to feel great fear of them. They produced an extremely powerful magic. (Qur'an, 7: 116)

As we have seen, Pharaoh's magicians were able to deceive everyone, apart from the Prophet Musa and those who believed in him. However, the evidence put forward by the Prophet Musa broke that spell, or "swallowed up what they had forged" as the verse puts it.

We revealed to Musa, "Throw down your staff." And it immediately swallowed up what they had forged. So the Truth took place and what they did was shown to be false. (Qur'an, 7: 117-119)

As we can see from that verse, when it was realized that what these people who had first cast a spell over others had done was just an illusion, they lost all credibility. In the

present day too, unless those who under the influence of a similar spell believe in these ridiculous claims under their scientific disguise and spend their lives defending them abandon them, they too will be humiliated when the full truth emerges and the spell is broken. In fact, Malcolm Muggeridge, an atheist philosopher and supporter of evolution admitted he was worried by just that prospect:

I myself am convinced that the theory of evolution, especially the extent to which it's been applied, will be one of the great jokes in the history books in the future. Posterity will marvel that so very flimsy and dubious an hypothesis could be accepted with the incredible credulity that it has.⁷¹

That future is not far off: On the contrary, people will soon see that "chance" is not a god, and will look back on the theory of evolution as the worst deceit and the most terrible spell in the world. That spell is already rapidly beginning to be lifted from the shoulders of people all over the world. Many people who see the true face of the theory of evolution are wondering with amazement how it was that they were ever taken in by it.

***They said "Glory be to You!
We have no knowledge except what
You have taught us. You are the All-Knowing,
the All-Wise."
(Qur'an, 2: 32)***

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- 3 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah (r.a.), Ahmad, Abu Dawud, 4/331
- 4 Mosnad Ahmad, 4/158, Ibn Qasir, 4/218
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- 7 The Pact of Najran, Article 6, http://www.islamicresources.com/Pact_of_Najran.htm
- 8 The Constitution of Medina, <http://www.islamicstudy.org/jews-prophet-page-2.htm>
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